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IRISH HOME RULE

S. G. HOBSON

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IRISH HOME RULE

BY S. G. HOBSON



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PREFACE

ANY study of modern Ireland must be largely influenced by M. Paul-Dubois, whose *L'Irlande Contemporaine*, perfectly translated into English, is published by Messrs Maunsel & Company, Limited, of Dublin. The completeness and astonishing accuracy of this brilliant Frenchman's work force all his successors to go to him. I have been compelled to quote him in several instances. It was the only honest course, for otherwise my text would have either consciously or unconsciously paraphrased him. Indeed, so clear is his narrative and so definite are his conclusions, that, more than once, I have found in my own text an unconscious acceptance of, or a *bona fide* similarity to, this writer's unique work. I acknowledge with thanks my indebtedness to Messrs Maunsel & Company for their permission thus to levy tribute upon a publication of theirs which is of priceless value to Ireland.

Another work, of less magnitude but exceedingly suggestive, also published by Messrs Maunsel & Company, is *Labour in Irish History*, by Mr James Connolly, who has succeeded in the

difficult task of disentangling the proletarian history of Ireland from its more superficial politics.

The balance-sheet showing Ireland's "true" revenue, which appears on page 93, is drawn up by Mr John J. Horgan, and influenced, I think, by the letters of Mr R. A. Atkins. I believe it to be substantially accurate. I am also indebted to Professor T. M. Kettle, whose raid into Irish finance has deeply affected the political situation. I am sorry that, at this critical moment in the history of Ireland, Parliament is deprived of the light which this brilliant young Irishman could shed upon the problem.

It always happens to every writer that his work is old the moment it is completed. I am no exception to the rule. Events are now moving with such rapidity that every day brings forth some new and important fact in connection with the Home Rule controversy. To avoid misunderstanding, therefore, I would like to remark that this very inadequate study was practically completed by 31st December 1911. I have since successfully resisted every impulse to cut and chop and change my written word.

Here and there my statistics may be a little out of date or some new light may have dawned upon some aspect of my argument. If I had

to write the book again, the main conclusions would be precisely those now appearing. That is not to say, however, that I might not have stressed my facts slightly differently. I now regret that I have failed (where Mr George W. Russell ("Æ") has succeeded) in depicting the sinister power that the "gombeen man" exerts over the farming folk of Ireland. In his charming brochure, *Co-operation and Nationality*, Mr Russell draws an appalling picture of the exactions and rascalities practised upon the small farmers, particularly in the west, by the middlemen who frequent Irish fairs and drive their trade of money-lending combined with market-rigging to the destruction of the actual cultivator. Mr Russell bluntly affirms that they impose far heavier burdens upon the unfortunate farmer than do the landlords. The Co-operative movement has done much to release the farmer from this bondage, but I warn Mr Russell and his colleagues that co-operation has its limits, and that land purchase is not the way out.

Although my study of Irish conditions drives me irresistibly to the Home Rule solution, I would not like it to be assumed that I believe a Parliament on College Green to be Ireland's panacea. Far from it. A Dublin Parliament can do immensely valuable work in making up

legislative arrears and in preparing the ground for Ireland's greatest need—economic regeneration. The Irish Parliament cannot itself regenerate Ireland; the Irish people must regenerate themselves. In this respect their motto must be *Sinn Fein*. The case against the British Parliament is not that it has failed to revive Ireland—it could never have done that,—but that it has effectually prevented the Irish people from working out their own economic salvation. In two ways: (a) by creating or maintaining conditions of economic servitude; and (b) by constraining the vast majority of Irishmen into the political preoccupation necessary to the successful assertion of the national spirit. With Home Rule an accomplished fact, this second condition ceases to be operative, but it will not in itself destroy that economic servitude which is the sure symptom of modern European civilisation. Those who believe that Parliament can cure deep economic evils have yet to learn that economic power precedes political power: that the latter is the mere reflex of the former.

It is my earnest prayer that the labouring population of Ireland may grasp this vital truth in the early days of Irish autonomy.

S. G. HOBSON.

February 15, 1912.

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ERRATA

Page 17, an asterisk should appear on line 4 after the word "Union," and a footnote should read :—

* *Labour in Irish History*, by James Connolly (Dublin, Maunsel & Co.).

Page 19, line 13, after the word "children" read "abroad."

Page 20, last line, after the word "to" read "such," and after "development" read "as may be permitted?"

Page 26, line 24, an asterisk should appear after the word "writes," and a footnote should read :—

* *Contemporary Ireland*, by M. Paul Dubois (Dublin, Maunsel & Co.).

Page 27, line 12, for "Gael" read "Pict."

I

IRISH REALITIES

IRELAND is a country where curses roost. It has been cursed by the loss of an army of intellectuals who left it in its despair for a larger stage ; by crafty politicians who time and again betrayed it at the critical moment ; its sons have shown courage, but they have also shown cowardice—moral cowardice that has blasted Ireland's hopes, where hope rose high ; by a long series of informers in infamous succession. Tantalus might have been Ireland's patron saint. But her greatest curse, beyond question, has been the atmosphere of romanticism which has veiled the sordid realities of Irish life and history. To-day it is an almost impossible task to impress the English people with the simple and elementary fact that Irishmen are " tempted like as we are " ; are flesh and blood in all respects like an Englishman, subject to the same hunger and thirst, the same hopes, fears, and longings. If an English-

man is told this, he will not deny it—how could he?—but at the back of his mind remains a reservation that Irishmen are so witty and imaginative that the normal appetites are lost in romantic and spiritual qualities peculiar to the “Island of the Saints.” English tourists in Ireland return to their own comfortable homes fully convinced that poverty is Ireland’s most precious and decorative asset. They believe that if Ireland became prosperous she would cease to be interesting ; that her wit and humour are in inverse ratio to her material possessions. How could the driver of a jaunting car be so amusing if he had had a good breakfast ? How could the brisk humour of the railway or hotel porter survive a substantial rise in wages ? The Irish people, lifted to a level of contented comfort, would infallibly lose their precious birth-right, and literature would be the poorer. The bright eyes of dark Rosaleen shine like stars because she lives on milk and potatoes and not on chops and steaks. To contemplate Ireland in a state of bourgeois prosperity would be the contemplation of the death of Ireland’s most charming characteristics. The vivacious, reckless, happy-go-lucky Irishman !

This preposterous misconception of Ireland’s grim realities is as much due to imaginative

journalists and maudlin *littérateurs* as to any wilful misunderstanding on the part of the unimaginative Briton. Doubtless, there are psychological reasons for it, not easily explicable nor easily brushed aside. Ethnographically considered, there is no Irish race ; it is compounded of Celt and Gael and Saxon and Norman in unknown proportions. But there is a people in Ireland, deriving their qualities in part from their ancestors and in part from their physical environment, with distinctive temperament and characteristics, the inheritors of a train of economic and social problems entirely peculiar to themselves and their country. And the prevailing note, over a long period of time, of these problems is one of genuine tragedy : lost opportunities, broken hopes, grinding economic and social tyranny. Now, John Bull is a sentimentalist in jack-boots. The Irish writers were quick to discover this, and accordingly emphasised the pathos and gloom of Irish life until all reality was submerged in romantic hogwash. Because of his sentimentalism, they sought to make him weep ; because of his jack-boots, they tried to wheedle him. Ireland now pays a stiff price : its squalor is turned unconsciously into glamour, like the alluring glitter of a stagnant pool.

Yet, from Dean Swift down to Mrs Stopford

Green, there have always been Irish writers who told the brutal truth. Alas! they wrote too well. They were brilliant or witty or mordant, and England preferred romance. Lever and his tribe captured the British heart: the Lever legend remains master of the field. Charlie O'Malley, that arrant and impossible fool and charlatan, is to-day regarded by untold thousands of Englishmen as the true type of Irishman. Nor does the damage end there. Who can tell how many thousands of young Irishmen have lost their souls in trying to live up to this spurious ideal?

Thus it has come to pass that plain facts have lost their value in the discussion of the Irish problem. Reason has succumbed to romanticism, logic has merged into symbolism. If Ireland is to be represented by a symbol, then it is not Kathleen ni Hoolihan, nor dark Rosaleen, nor a tearful and tragic woman whom the poets always call Erin, but a farm labourer with bent back and calloused hands. Forget him: then the Irish problem loses half its significance. The greatest act of treachery to Ireland to-day is to disregard the Irish peasant and to remember Mr W. B. Yeats. The Irish literary revival is no doubt interesting, suggestive, and picturesque, but the urgent issue is the economic revival in Ireland of those who labour with their hands.

Paradoxical though it may seem, it is nevertheless true that the Irish farm labourer is really by nature an artisan and a craftsman. By no stretch of the imagination can he be regarded as the prototype of the English Hodge, even when we remember that Hodge is a much more skilful workman than is generally credited. But the Irish farm hand is where he is, not because he wishes it, but because he has been pushed there by circumstances beyond his control. A common English delusion is that the Irish peasantry are lazy and shiftless. It has been proved beyond cavil that, given the slightest inducement, he will outvie the French peasant both for thoroughness and the length of his day's work. He will turn to fruitful account land apparently so utterly sterile that no English cultivator would look at it. Nevertheless, his great-grandfather was one of the most competent craftsmen in the world. The instinct persists. At the end of the eighteenth century, English bibliophiles sent their books to Dublin to be bound. Irish leather and leather-products were famous throughout Europe. During this period Ireland manufactured the sails for the British navy. Her silk was equally famous. Her artisans built ships and coaches equal to the best. Irish woollen goods bore down all competition. But let Lord Dufferin tell the story :—

“ From Queen Elizabeth’s reign until the Union, the various confraternities of Great Britain never for a moment relaxed their relentless grip on the trades of Ireland. One by one, each of our nascent industries was either strangled in its birth, or handed over, gagged and bound, to the jealous custody of the rival interest in England, until at last every fountain of wealth was hermetically sealed, and even the traditions of commercial enterprise have perished through desuetude. The owners of England’s pastures had the honour of opening the campaign. As early as the commencement of the eighteenth century the beeves of Roscommon, Tipperary, and Queen’s County undersold the produce of the English grass counties in their own market. By an Act [of Parliament] Irish cattle were declared ‘a nuisance’ and their importation prohibited. Forbidden to send our beasts alive across the Channel, we killed them at home and began to supply the sister country with cured provisions. A second Act of Parliament imposed prohibitory duties on salted meats. The hides of the animals still remained ; but the same influence put a stop to the importation of leather. Our cattle trade abolished, we tried sheep-farming. The sheep-breeders of England immediately took alarm, and Irish wool was declared contraband.

“ Headed off in this direction, we tried to work up the raw material at home ; but this created the greatest outcry of all. Every maker of fustian, flannel, and broadcloth in the country rose up in arms, and by an Act of William III. the woollen industry of Ireland was extinguished and 20,000 manufacturers left the island. The easiness of the Irish labour market and the cheap-

ness of provisions still giving us an advantage, even though we had to import our materials, we next made a dash at the silk business ; but the English silk manufacturer, the sugar refiner, the soap and candle maker (who specially dreaded the abundance of our kelp), and every other trade or interest that thought it worth its while to petition, was received by Parliament with the same partial cordiality, until the most searching scouting failed to detect a single vent through which it was possible for the hated industry of Ireland to respire. But although excluded from the markets of Great Britain, a hundred harbours gave her access to the universal sea. Alas ! a rival commerce on her own element was still less welcome to England, and as early as the reign of Charles II. the Levant, the ports of Europe, and the oceans beyond the Cape of Good Hope were forbidden the flag of Ireland. The colonial trade alone was in a manner open, if that can be called an open trade which for a long time precluded all exports whatever, and excluded from direct importation to Ireland such important articles as sugar, cotton, and tobacco. What has been the consequence of such a system, pursued with relentless pertinacity for two hundred and fifty years ? This—*that, debarred from every other trade and industry*, the entire nation flung itself back upon *the land*, with as fatal an impulse as when a river, whose current is suddenly impeded, rolls back and drowns the valley it once fertilised.”

This vivid *résumé* of Ireland’s thwarted industrial ambitions by no means belongs to the category of “ old, forgotten, far-off things.” On

the contrary, it is writ large upon the physiology, the physiognomy, and the psychology of the man of sorrows who now tills the Irish soil. In 1779 free trade was conceded to Ireland. What was the result ? Lord Plunket, in 1799, said :—

“Ireland’s revenues, her trade, her manufactures, had thriven beyond the hope or the example of any other country of her extent, within these few years advancing with a rapidity astonishing even to herself.”

Lord Clare was even more emphatic :—

“There is not a nation on the face of the habitable globe which has advanced in cultivation, in agriculture, in manufactures, with the same rapidity in the same period as Ireland.”

Granting, as we must, that this was very good business for the Irish capitalists and landlords, and admitting further, as we must, that the Irish labourer was harshly treated and scandalously underpaid, it nevertheless proves that Ireland was capable of producing artisans and craftsmen of undoubted ability.

The years that followed are as discreditable to Irish capitalism as to English statesmanship. In 1798 came the rebellion. For the moment the Volunteers were victorious and an industrial democracy in sight. But Irish capital grew shy and frightened, failed lamentably to realise the

situation, and finally added its influence to an already debauched aristocracy, with the result that the Volunteers were betrayed and the way paved for the Act of Union. Mr James Connolly, a remarkably clear-sighted writer on Irish economics, says :—

“ The Act of Union was made possible because Irish manufacture was weak, and, consequently, Ireland had not an energetic capitalist class with sufficient public spirit and influence to prevent the Union.

“ Industrial decline having set in, the Irish capitalist class was not able to combat the influence of the corruption fund of the English Government, or to create and lead a party strong enough to arrest the demoralisation of Irish public life. . . . Not that the loss of the Parliament destroyed Irish manufacture, but that the decline of Irish manufacture made possible the destruction of the Irish Parliament. Had a strong, enterprising, and successful capitalist class been in existence in Ireland, a Parliamentary reform investing the Irish masses with the suffrage would have been won under the guns of the Volunteers without a drop of blood being shed, and with a Parliament elected under such conditions the Act of Union would have been impossible. . . . An Ireland controlled by popular suffrage would undoubtedly have sought to save Irish industry while it was yet time. . . .”

Whether *post hoc* or *propter hoc*, the fact remains that the years succeeding the Union

marked the death of industrial Ireland. In the year 1800 the city of Dublin possessed 91 woollen factories, employing nearly 5000 workmen ; in 1840 there were 12 left, employing less than 700. In 1800 she possessed 2500 silk looms ; in 1840 there were 250. In 1800 there were 27,000 workmen employed in the cotton trade ; in 1839 there were 12,000. Mr Connolly tells us that during this period the district that lies between Thomas Street, in Dublin, and the South Circular Road was a busy hive of men engaged, in the tanning of leather and all its allied trades. Other industrial districts, such as Wicklow and Roscrea, encountered the same fate. In the eighteenth century Ireland suffered from mercantilism ; Mr Connolly and M. Paul-Dubois agree that in the nineteenth century the cause of the *débâcle* was the unwise application of the doctrines of the Manchester School.

But it is not my purpose to deal historically with the Irish question. I am only now concerned to trace the effect upon the agricultural labourer of the industrial disintegration of Ireland. We have seen that by 1840 the trade of Leinster, the most important province of Ireland, had been ruined, whether by the chicken-hearted policy of Irish capitalists or by the Act of Union or by both. In 1846 and 1847 came

the Irish famine, which marks a turning-point not only in Irish but in English history. Can it be doubted that had industry developed on healthy lines the worst horrors of that unspeakable period would have been avoided? From that time on came an accelerated rush of emigration, and Ireland was bled white. The artisan spirit was killed; those who stayed behind had no resource but the land; those who went became hewers of wood and drawers of water in America and Australia, travelling their *via dolorosa* from the cradle to the grave. But their children are once more skilled artisans, traders, commercial leaders, bankers, or what not. Are the children in Ireland in essence any different?

Now, I have deliberately placed in the forefront of this monograph the industrial issue in Ireland, because no nation or large community can be deemed to be in economic health unless there is a true equipoise between its agriculture and its manufactures. I go further. Neither the Irish nor any other people can be rightly recognised as a nation if its social structure be permanently maimed or incomplete. If, therefore, I believed that this harmonious relation between agriculture and the crafts were impossible in Ireland, it would modify my view as to the vitality of Irish nationality. But having

regard to the past industrial history of Ireland, realising that the decay of its manufactures was fortuitous rather than inherent, recognising still further that the linen trade (wherein both Protestants and Catholics are engaged) prospers because it has not been subjected to the same political and economic pressure, that the Belfast shipbuilding industry (in which both Catholics and Protestants are employed) is able to seize its commercial opportunities, that the Irish woollen trade (in which mainly Catholics are employed) is again asserting its old pre-eminence, that other nascent industries are showing distinct signs of lusty strength—how can it be doubted that Ireland can prove its claim to national recognition in the economic as in the political and spiritual spheres ?

Thus our bent-backed agricultural labourer becomes a Protean symbol. He is the symbol of what his forefathers were, of what Ireland is to-day, of what her children will be, of the Irish people as an agricultural and industrial whole, breathing a distinctive national spirit upon the world's mirror.

But the question yet remains to be answered : Can Ireland best realise her social and economic harmony by managing her own household, or by remaining in tutelage to Great Britain and trusting to economic development ?



II

IRISH NATIONALITY

THERE is a vital distinction between national and local sentiment : the one is dynamic, the other is but static. For the nation its children will, if need be, die ; for the locality, its inhabitants prefer to live comfortably. A great Irishman in the civil service, who has faced danger and death in many parts of the globe, and whose services to the Empire have been honoured by the Crown, recently said to me that in all his difficulties and adventures his first and last thought was to preserve unsullied the honour of Ireland. He added that Ireland could have him the moment she wanted him. Now, a man might say this of Scotland or Wales or England, but never of Sussex or Lancashire. The sense of nationality crystallises in him, producing a spiritual attitude towards the world easily to be recognised. I confess I find it difficult to believe that a certain school of

political thought in England is serious when it expressly denies to Ireland the quality as well as the status of nationality. For centuries Ireland has bred men and women who, by every available test, betray the stigmata of true nationality—uniquely Irish, and in every fundamental aspect distinct from and alien to English patriotism. Professor T. M. Kettle has truly said that “it is the French that have come closest to the secret of Ireland.” If Ireland were an integral part of England, such a statement would be absurd. Yet every student of Irish history knows that Professor Kettle’s statement is the merest truism. M. Paul-Dubois is clear that the sympathy which Ireland has always manifested towards France has a deeper source than mere hatred of England. “There is between Ireland and France a certain affinity of character, a certain likeness of qualities, tendencies, and, let us add, even defects, the outcome in all probability of common Celtic blood and similar climatic conditions.” The point is an academic one, but it brings out in bold relief the fact that Ireland is not England, that Irishmen are not Englishmen. But if France were Ireland’s master, it would be equally true to affirm that Ireland would preserve her national traits, distinct from France as from England.

It is difficult for Englishmen fully to appreciate national sentiment. Not because they are lacking in patriotism, but because England's sovereignty has never been ravished. It is only in storm and stress that the deeper meaning of nationality springs into consciousness. The nationality of a people who are unhampered and undisturbed by foreign interference or aggression is nine-tenths an unconscious element in their existence. They seem as indifferent to it as a lady to her virtue : but once threaten either the national existence or the virtue, and volcanic forces are let loose.

Now, apart altogether from material considerations, the malady of Ireland, transmitted generation after generation, is this acute consciousness of ravished nationality. So painful is it, that it is the preoccupation of Irishmen of every creed and of every class. Its evil effects are incalculable. The production of wealth becomes a secondary consideration ; the world-movement sweeps by, leaving Ireland practically untouched and certainly uninfluenced. Intellectual life, save upon the one insistent issue, grows well-nigh sterile. It is as though some invalid thought only of his disease, and read only the medical literature relating to his case. The pain throbs perpetually ; do what he will, strive

how he may, he cannot forget. Should any group of Irishmen remind their countrymen that economic regeneration calls for urgent attention, the people turn fiercely upon them : " Is this a time to think of such things ? Traitors ! " Herein, too, may be discovered the psychological explanation of Ireland's undoubted hatred of Great Britain. It is to be found in the tragic contrast between the two nations. England, complacently secure in its national sanctities ; Ireland, with its national wings broken so that it cannot soar. Englishmen trooping through Europe and the world with the unconscious arrogance of uninterrupted triumph ; Irishmen, equally proud, explaining their situation, but with tears near the surface. England, unravished, lost in wonder that Ireland should trouble about so small a matter. Let England admit Ireland to the queenly circle of the nations, and Ireland's hatred will disappear like a mist before the sun. The danger—a very genuine danger—is that England may do it ungraciously. Her appalling lack of understanding of Ireland's spiritual necessity may irretrievably spoil the gift. The Protestant rector of Mallow, in addressing a Protestant Conference in Belfast, said :—

" I am glad to bear testimony to the kindly consideration and the cordial generosity which have always been

extended to me by Catholic neighbours in the County Cork. I cannot believe that this happy relationship would be altered under a Home Rule Government. *What we do fear is that some stupid Government will arise and impose upon us a bogus Home Rule, which will not satisfy Nationalist aspirations, and which will only plunge the country into another period of unrest and unsettlement."*

There is a vast difference between a national hatred arising out of purely historical and remediable causes, and a hatred rooted in temperamental divergence. In the first case the feeling can be dispelled by making the requisite constitutional changes ; in the second, it is permanent and ineradicable. Now, I reject the second theory without doubt or hesitation. Yet it is terribly prevalent. Let us briefly examine it. English literature is choke-full of fanciful analyses of Irish characteristics. So ethereal seems the Irishman under the magic of their pens, that one might believe him too delicately contrived to stick a pig. These English impressionists wax so lyrical that by contrast they see in their own countrymen the *dernier cri* of incurable vulgarity. Thus Matthew Arnold in his *Irish Essays* describes his fellow-countrymen as " an upper class materialised, a middle class vulgarised, a lower class brutalised." Had he known Ireland a little more

intimately, he might have found Irish counterparts. Nevertheless, it is possible to draw a broad generalisation that the Irish temperament is on the whole more *spirituel*, more alert and vivacious, quicker-witted, more imaginative, than the Anglo-Saxon. But if any Englishman goes to Ireland and, basing himself upon this generalisation, tries to out-bargain an Irish trader, it is a moral certainty he will return a sadder and a wiser man. The Celtic quality has its soft and mystic beauties, but underneath will be found a hardness that yields to no blandishment. Many thinkers and writers are prepared to contend that Irish political history would be much what it is whatever the race inhabiting the island. Given the same conditions, the same physical environment, the same political results would inevitably ensue. Sir George Cornewall Lewis put it bluntly and not too politely : “ I have no doubt that a Protestant German peasantry, if properly oppressed and brutalised, would be made as bad as the Irish.” This argument carries the theory of environment to the height of absurdity. I agree with M. Paul-Dubois when he writes :—

“ This makes it difficult to explain how we find in the Irish character of to-day so many traits which belonged to the Gaels in the sixth and seventh centuries, traits that were acquired, definite, and independent of the

moment, such, if you will, as great power of imagination and of sentiment, or religious ardour. These characteristics were so deeply graved on the Irish mind that their traces are to be recognised in it from the most primitive times, and persist to our day, despite all the modifications and developments of subsequent history. Surely it is as great an exaggeration to deny all racial influence on the psychology of a people as to attribute everything to it. The truth is that in the analysis of national character we must take into consideration every fact—ethnic, historical, and social.”

The Gael still persists in the Irish character ; so also the Celt ; Norman ancestry and Norman types are not uncommon in Wexford, Wicklow, and Cork ; Anglicisation has played no inconsiderable part. In the sum-total a type (endlessly varied) is produced, and him we know as the Irishman.

But what possible warrant can there be for assuming eternal hatred between this type and any other ? All we know is that, given certain economic and political conditions involving tyranny of one sort or another, hatred deep and bitter inevitably is generated ; change those conditions, and the cause of exasperation is removed. It is true that the virulence of the struggle will be conditioned by the types engaged. Thus an imaginative and quick-witted type oppressed by its temperamental opposite will

feel bitterly and fight remorselessly. Nevertheless, the fight once honourably concluded, there is nothing in the world to preclude an enduring friendship. Further, in the case of England and Ireland, are not their qualities complementary the one to the other? Given a common purpose in the world's affairs, do they not constitute an excellent working combination and partnership? And it is relevant to remember that reconciled enemies often become better friends than if they had never fought.

Another factor making for ultimate amity and understanding is the common interests of the two industrial democracies. Organised capital knows no frontier; organised labour is a fraternal movement spiritually as well as economically international. Even to-day the great British trades unions—the engineers, carpenters, railway servants, and others—include Ireland in the scope of their operations.

I have already commented upon the *vraisemblance* in character between the French and the Irish. It is only a few years ago that Mr Chamberlain exhorted his fellow-countrymen to draw near to their kinsmen, the Germans, threatening at the same time to give the French a lesson in manners. Undoubtedly the English and German have much in common, not only in character

but in commerce. Yet to-day England is congratulating itself upon having providentially escaped from a war with Germany in the interests of France and the *entente cordiale*. If, then, a friendship with France is an accomplished fact, why not with Ireland ?

We may confidently dismiss from our consideration the theory that Ireland's hatred of England is rooted in unchanging temperament, and is therefore impermeable and imperishable.

A much larger problem now arises. Is it compatible with the theory of nationality to accept the suzerainty of another power ? There is ample historical justification for an answer in the affirmative. But that need not detain us ; the real problem is the relation of small nationalities to imperial organisation. Now, whatever their purpose or policy, there is this fundamental distinction between ancient and modern empires : the former lived and perished by the sword ; the latter can only exist by the consent of their component or co-ordinate parts. Internecine war may exhaust a nation ; it is fatal to a modern empire. The weaker nations in the German confederation may be jealous of the arrogant and overbearing powers of Prussia, but they know that their safety is found inside and not

outside the empire. If, however, any centrifugal movement occurred, it is doubtful if the Kaiser, with all his hosts, could stem the current. Nor could Great Britain compel Canada or Australia, or even South Africa, to obey its imperial sway by force of arms. But it is obvious that consent must be contingent upon a large degree of autonomy. To-day Canada proudly proclaims its nationhood: "Daughter am I in my mother's house, but mistress in my own." And there are occasions when the status of her mother is more analogous to that of a mother-in-law. Australia floats its own flag and mutters ominously at the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. South Africa has conquered England, treating the British High Commissioner with scarcely veiled contempt. Yet they all remain inside the British Empire for good and substantial reasons. But if their autonomy were invaded, the British Empire would fall with a crash. Although, historically considered, these three dominions are British colonies, there can be no doubt that they have evolved into distinct nationalities, with the dynamic qualities that differentiate nations from mere settlements. Nevertheless, they are agreed that their dignity is greater under the flag of empire than as isolated and independent units. Even the Crown Colonies are fast

making good their claim to complete self-government: Jamaica and Ceylon are cases in point.

It is no part of my design or desire to defend imperialism as it manifests itself to-day. In many ways it is palpably playing an ignoble part. But there can be no question that there is nothing inconsistent with the idea of nationality in alliance with an empire maintained on a basis of complete self-government. The weakness of the British Empire to-day lies in quite another direction. It has yet to discover a formula that will lead to federal home rule. This, at least, is certain: that formula remains hidden in the clouds until the Irish question is settled equitably and graciously.

I profoundly believe that the small nations are destined to influence mankind to a far greater degree in the future than they ever did in the past. If it is to be the function of empires to police the world, it is the small nations who will do our thinking, write our books, paint our pictures, and produce our music. Relieved for ever from the preoccupation of military and naval defence, their industries linked up with the larger economic formations, at last there will be time and opportunity to develop the æsthetic faculties and impress the world with the eternal truth (now almost forgotten in a wild welter of

insensate Jingoism) that man does not live by bread alone. In this great task Ireland will inevitably take a high place in the hierarchy of the small nations. There is a school of utilitarians in Ireland who dream of a great commercial future. Let it be agreed and even emphasised that an economic equipoise is essential between agriculture and manufacture. That is, after all, a reasonably easy undertaking. A nobler work will be to prove the truth of a critic's judgment: "Naturally vigorous, positive, and clear, like the French, though perhaps less methodical, in so far as it has been less moulded by Latin influence, the Irish mind is especially adapted for the speculative in philosophy and the abstract in science."

III

IRISH WASTE

SIR HERCULES LANGRISHE accounted for the swampy condition of Phoenix Park by remarking that "the English Government are too much engaged in *draining* the rest of the kingdom to find time to attend to it." This is quite literally a true statement of Ireland's domestic economy. In whatever direction we turn we discover gross economic waste. The administrative expenses of government administration are a scandal and a crime. Consider, for example, this abstract from the Inland Revenue Report, 1910 :—

	Scotland.	Ireland.
Number of Government officials with incomes of £160 a year and over	944	4397
Amount of income . .	£319,237	£1,441,131

A waste of £1,000,000 a year !

In the proceedings of the Financial Relations Commission there is a report by Lord Farrer,

Lord Welby, and Mr Currie—all experienced administrators. They write :—

“ The expenditure of Belgium may be compared not unfavourably with that of Ireland. In Belgium, as in Ireland, government is centralised and the functions of administration are extended. The imports and exports of Belgium, excluding transit trade, are valued at £117,000,000 in 1893 ; those of Ireland are guessed at £45,000,000. In short, if Ireland is said to be poor, Belgium is beyond question prosperous, wealthy, and progressive ; yet the charge of civil government in Ireland for 1892–93 was £4,544,000, whilst the charge for like purposes in Belgium in 1893 was £2,600,000. We therefore state the case much against Belgium if we reckon in broad figures her expenditure to that of Ireland as 3 to 4½. That is, civil administration in Belgium (population 6,300,000 in 1893) cost less than 10s. a head ; in Ireland, 19s. 7d., or double.”

A waste, not of £1,000,000, but £2,000,000 !

Take the annual cost of the Constabulary :—

Ireland.	Scotland.
£1,300,000	£400,000

Yet there is less crime in Ireland than in Scotland. Look at it another way :—Ireland has one constable for every 362 inhabitants, England one for 541, Scotland one for 885. The cost per head works out in England at 2s. 3d.

per head ; in Ireland, 6s. 7d. Another million wasted !

Now look at the costs of the judicature :—

TOTAL LAW CHARGES

Ireland.	Scotland.
£421,384	£228,383

It is the same in practically every department of civil administration in Ireland. In 1841, when her population was 8,175,124, civil administration cost £1,400,000 ; in 1910, with a population of 4,000,000, the figure had risen to £9,077,500.

It amounts to an official rack-rent charge of £4,000,000 a year—indefensible, shameless waste. “ But why not stop it ? ” is a question that any practical man would ask. The answer is that it is to nobody’s interest to staunch the flow, for the simple reason that any saving effected goes into the British Exchequer and Ireland loses just so much in spending capacity. This spirit of fatalism tells in small things as in great. The Civil Service estimate last year for stationery and postage in respect of public departments is, for Scotland, £24,000 ; for Ireland, £43,000. *Ex uno omne discas.*

But the waste on civil administration is a mere flea-bite compared with Ireland’s appalling

loss, actual and potential, on its railway administration. The colossal stupidity of the situation is past belief. The capital indebtedness of the Irish railway system is just over £11,000,000. Its mileage is over 3000 miles, about the same as the English Great Western Company. There are thirty different railway companies, but Irish railway policy is dictated by the six largest. There is practically no competition, and the companies, having no body to kick nor soul to damn, callously apply the American principle of charging what the traffic can bear. The canal system, as in England, has fallen under the control of the railways, and has in consequence fallen into desuetude. These commercial cormorants are not short of money, for they average a higher dividend than is won by the English companies. What is the result of their operations? Quite literally, death and devastation. Their function is supposed to be that of economical carriers of Irish travellers and produce. In practice, they carry passengers at maximum rates and maximum discomfort. As for Irish produce, they seem to take a fiendish delight in making it difficult for the Irish and easy for the English trader. Thus the freight-rate from Liverpool to Cavan is 10s. 8d.; from Cavan to Liverpool it is 16s. 8d. A woollen factory was

recently started in the town of Galway. In the next county—Roscommon—at Arigna, there is plenty of suitable coal at 8s. 6d. per ton ; but the freight-rate to Galway is 13s. 6d. The Galway people accordingly obtain their coal from England at a much cheaper price delivered. It would be easy to multiply these instances. But let us take a bird's-eye view :—

AVERAGE TARIFF PER TON OF GOODS

	England.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1880 . .	5s. 8·35d.	5s. 5·5d.	6s. 11·27d.
1900 . .	4s. 10·26d.	4s. 11·64d.	6s. 7·9d.

AVERAGE PASSENGER RATE

7d. to 8½d. 7½d. to 10½d. 1s. 1d. to 1s. 2d.

“The tariffs for ‘smalls’”—I quote M. Paul-Dubois—“or lesser packages are prohibitive, and preclude the small producer from conveying his goods directly to the market. Heavy traffic, such as coal, stones, marble, wood, minerals, has been made almost impossible by the high rates. In Galway there is an American company that forwards marble to America at lower rates than those charged for sending it to places within Ireland itself. The carriage of cattle, which alone represents 14 per cent. of the gross receipts of the railways, is not only very costly, but is so negligently carried out that Ireland loses about half a million sterling every year owing to accidents, delays, and the like.”

“Surely,” exclaims the English business man, “these heavy charges must be due to initial cost or high wages?” He is hopelessly astray. On the contrary, the cost of construction averages less than £15,000 per mile, whilst in England it may be £70,000. Not only so, but the Irish companies are lightly capitalised, whilst their wages are the despair of the trade union. The only possible explanation is commercial myopia.

A disquieting feature of the problem is the invasion of the English railway companies. Thus the Great Western Company of England largely controls the Great Southern and Western of Ireland. The English London and North-Western owns the Dundalk, Newry, and Greenore, and has a large interest in the Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Company. The English Midland controls the Belfast and Northern Counties Company. The result is only too obvious. Every facility is given to the British trader, whilst the Irish trader remains, as before, in the fatal grip of his own octopus. This in its turn has led to a deadening of Irish productivity, and an increase in number and commercial power of the middleman, whose percentage to population has risen in fifty years from 2·6 to 5·4.

We can now appreciate the sardonic humour of an Irish peasant who genially remarked to Mr

Shaw-Lefevre : " Do you see that piece of water ? If I could sell that water in hell I could get any money I wanted for it ; but the job is to get it there."

Unless Ireland is to exchange the King Log of the landlord for the King Stork of the railway director (there are 130 of them), there must be a prompt reversal of railway policy. The true line to pursue is not to strangle the traffic but to develop it. At Castlecomer there are 118 million tons of anthracite coal. No railway goes there ! There are zinc mines at Nenagh. The railway companies have choked them up by their impudent extortions. This is no new question. In 1834 a Royal Commission recommended that Irish railways should be financed by the State and be subject to State control. Just at that time the British Government was deeply pondering how it could impose upon Ireland an alien, a cruel, and an extravagant poor-law system. In 1886 Lord Salisbury and Lord Randolph Churchill declared for the nationalisation of the Irish railways. In the stress of politics nothing came of it. Mr Balfour passed the Light Railways Act, and actually built some. Then they were handed over to the existing companies ! It is a perpetual nightmare to every thinking or travelled Irishman.

But—the ever-recurring, insistent question—is it possible that any British Government could have the capacity or find the time to make the Irish railways the servants and not the masters of the Irish people ?

If, then, we add to the annual four millions sterling wasted on the civil administration another ten millions actually or potentially lost by an incompetent railway service, shall we be far wrong ? But Irish waste by no means ends here. There are certainly not less than 1,500,000 acres of waste Irish land that could be economically reclaimed. Mr MacVeagh, M.P., asserts that it can be done for £6, 10s. an acre. The Dutch Government drained Lake Haarlem, transforming it into 45,000 acres of meadow, at a cost of £19 an acre. They reclaimed 500,000 acres out of the Zuyder Zee at a cost of £18 an acre, afterwards selling the land at £34 an acre. There are only 15,536,751 acres of cultivable soil in Ireland. When we remember the land hunger so prevalent there, an additional 1,500,000 acres would constitute a substantial alleviation. Nor do I doubt that £6, 10s. is a reasonable price, for there is an abundance of good and, alas ! cheap labour. Every year from the congested districts from 25,000 to 30,000 farm labourers migrate to England and Scotland for the harvest. They

receive from 14s. to 30s. a week (average 18s.), and bring back about £10, which, after deducting their travelling expenses, leaves them with about £7, 10s. clear gain. This small sum represents about all the cash they handle throughout the year, the rest of their miserable income being the proceeds of a rather primitive barter. "The Report on Migratory Labourers for 1900" estimates the total profits at £275,000. It would certainly be more advantageous and an altogether wiser economy to set some of these men to the reclamation of waste lands at reasonable wages and under humane conditions. Further, we must remember that employment for the English harvest grows yearly more precarious. The introduction of harvesting machinery may soon oust them. If that should happen in the near future, a new situation would arise in the West of Ireland vividly reminiscent of, if not actually similar to, any famine period of the past. Indeed, the danger is imminent. A year or two ago an unhappy combination of a bad English harvest and a failure of the potato crop created such a situation. A considerable population in the counties of Mayo and Galway were in consequence actually dying of starvation. Meetings were held and an urgent demand made, not for charity, but for employment on public works. At Bel-

mullet, a band of five hundred peasants, shouting that they were starving, and nearly all holding eviction notices in their hands, broke into a meeting of the Board of Guardians, crying: "Work or food!" And, be it noted, the public works referred to had been long promised and long postponed.

But is this work for an English or for an Irish Parliament?

Yet another element of economic waste (in this instance not peculiar to Ireland) is the neglect to afforest suitable lands. Herr Howitz, the Dutch Forest Conservator, gave evidence before the Eardley-Wilmot Committee in 1886. He there declared that had the forests of Ireland been protected and fostered they would represent a value of £100,000,000. But Irish forests have been ruthlessly destroyed. Herr Howitz—and other experts agree with him—estimates that there are 3,000,000 acres of land in Ireland that could be profitably planted. Such an operation would need an annual expenditure of a large sum over a period of twenty-five years, but would then yield an annual profit of £3,000,000. When we remember that the timber lands of Europe and America are fast being depleted, and that the price of timber tends to rise rather than fall, there seems to me no reason why this estimate should not be fully realised.

The postponement or negation of these and many other schemes for economic regeneration carries in its train the waste or misdirection of existing Irish capital. The Irish banks devote their deposits to almost any purpose other than Irish requirements. There are nine considerable banks with a total paid-up capital of £7,209,230. They pay good dividends, ranging from 5 to 20 per cent. Yet they do little of the business ordinarily transacted by an English bank. They derive their profits because their deposits run to large figures. The total amount of these deposits in any recent year is probably nearly £50,000,000. Owing to the torpor or non-existence of Irish industries, the Irish depositor lets his balance accumulate. These banks never dream of assisting local industries. They send the money to England to be invested in public funds, in English, Colonial, or even foreign securities. Certainly Irish deposits bear no fruit in Ireland. I do not think that the banks are to be blamed. Absolute and unquestioned security they must have, even if they go to London for it. Yet in Finland, or Sweden, or Denmark the banks (generally modelled on the German system) do extremely profitable business by investing or lending money at home. But suppose Ireland were to secure a responsive and sympa-

thetic railway system, suppose such works as land reclamation and afforestation were undertaken either by the Irish Government or under its guarantee, it is at once evident that Irish capital would be easily available. In any event, an Irish national debt based not only on the security of the Irish taxpayer, but with these productive undertakings specifically hypothecated, would be easily floated, either in Ireland itself, or in England, or France, or America.

I am not sure if the very excellence of the security offered would not prove a prolific source of temptation and danger to the Irish Government. Wherever a public loan on good security is possible, there is always an army of financial sharks ready to offer extremely favourable terms for its flotation. When such a temptation comes to the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer it is devoutly to be hoped that he will think many times before yielding to the seductions of the money-brokers. Let him remember that in the final analysis it is the peasant and the workman who must needs pay both principal and interest. It is easy to pass on a financial load to posterity. Was it not an Irishman who once asked, "What has posterity done for us?" But the stern truth is that any overloading of the Irish National Debt is not

only bad finance, but a very present evil. There is a wide margin between stinting any national undertaking by confining monetary requirements to current account, and, alternatively, by living on constant drafts on the future. The one is as fatal as the other. The main consideration must be wages and wage conditions. It is comparatively easy to pay high wages and then clip them by taxation (probably indirect) to pay interest and sinking fund on borrowed money. The moneylender may be a good servant, but he is undoubtedly a harsh and unyielding master. A new Ireland mortgaged up to the hilt would be a sore sight for the gods.

There are many of us who earnestly pray that a regenerated Ireland will learn that the wise policy is undeviating devotion to the economy of high wages. It must be frankly and sorrowfully admitted that in this respect Ireland is still in the mid-Victorian period. The occupying owner of Irish land is now on tolerably firm ground. An all-round fall in agricultural prices may bring about another crisis. *Absit omen!* In so far as he himself works his own land, it may truthfully be affirmed that he himself pays his own increments. But where he engages labourers, can it be so affirmed? It is well to remember that many a landless labourer, working at starvation

wages, is paying with his own blood and the blood of his children for the ultimate ownership by his employer of land that has passed from tribal to private possession, leaving him, in more senses than one, out in the cold. "The destruction of the poor is their poverty." But the bad economy, even from the employer's point of view, is the drain on his labourer's physique and the sequential lowering of the vitality of that section of the community that most needs physical and moral sustenance. In this, as in other respects, waste must be transformed into fruitfulness.

IV

IRISH AGRICULTURE

“*Qui terre a, guerre a.*” There is only one man who appreciates the acrid humour of the French proverb more than an Irish landlord, and that is an Irish peasant. For longer than one cares to think, land and war have been twin brothers in Ireland. War between landlord and tenant ; war often between tenant and tenant ; feuds between families—too often even between fathers and sons. There can be no Arcadia where there is land hunger. In so far, however, as this war has been or is due to inequitable laws, it is our business to restore peace. And in so far as trouble arises, often under family pressure, by splitting up holdings until they fall below the economic minimum, it is also the business of the State to intervene. And, of course, the two problems are interrelated.

Let me briefly set out the material facts.

According to the last census, 2,664,204 people

in Ireland, out of a total population of less than four and a half millions, were directly dependent upon the land for their existence. The number of heads of families who are tenants or occupying owners was estimated in 1903 at 544,625. To this number must be added the agricultural labourers. There are between 12,000 and 15,000 landlords, great and small. Thus, whereas in England the rural population amounts to only 19 per cent., in Ireland it is 64 per cent. The agricultural population in Germany is 41 per cent. ; in France it is 50.

This agricultural army has to live upon 15,536,751 acres of cultivable soil.

Including the wages and profits of labourers and farmers, and landlords' rent, the average yearly profit or income is estimated at £40,000,000. The landlords' share is estimated at £8,000,000.

At the first blush it would seem as though there were ample acreage for the rural population. But official statistics show that only 3,038,072 acres, or about 19 per cent., are under cultivation. There are actually 4,638,978 acres under crops, but we must deduct 1,596,906 of these because they are hay mown on permanent pasture.

Here we hit upon one of the most prolific causes of the land war. The cultivating peasant

asserts that he has been driven from the best to the worst land to make way for many animals and few men. This struggle between tillage and pasturage, in its present form, dates back to 1815, when, after Napoleon's defeat, agricultural prices fell. The struggle was intensified by the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1847. Concurrently with bad prices grew that excessive subdivision of land until western Ireland was covered with uneconomic holdings. Then came the tragic crisis of the famine, which lasted three heart-rending years. Then followed the clearances, lasting off and on for thirty years. The peasants were both economically and politically impotent : they could do nothing. The Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 robbed the majority of their vote. They were in the hands of a Fate against which they were powerless to struggle. On their side, the landlords were in the grip of the moneylender. On inquiry it was discovered that one-third were actually bankrupt, burdened with mortgages, debts, incumbrances, and other liabilities. But their land was inalienable. To cut this Gordian knot the Encumbered Estates Act was passed in 1849. The Encumbered Estates Court was formed under it, and by it empowered, on the petition of a substantial creditor, to sell the land and give an indefeasible

title to the purchaser. Thus the creditors, as a body, possessed no further lien upon the land, and had to content themselves with their share of the purchase money. The rush of creditors was so great, and the fall of prices so pronounced, that Irish land became a drug upon the market. The old intricate and subtle relationship between landlord and tenant came to an end. The new owners had bought the land as a speculation, and treated the whole matter as a commercial transaction pure and simple. These land speculators were quick to see that the economic unit was not the small holding but the large grazing or tillage farm. In Gladstone's phrase, "notices to quit fell like snowflakes." The starveling population was swept into Hades; oxen and sheep supplanted them. In ten years 282,000 peasant homes were destroyed, and 1,500,000 Irishmen—the bone and sinew of the country—emigrated to America. "*Cælum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt*": they remembered Ireland, and in due time caused England to remember them. Sir Charles Gavan Duffy in *Young Ireland* quotes Sir Robert Peel: "In one union, at a time of famine, within one year, 15,000 persons have been driven from their homes. . . . I do not think the record of any country, civilised or barbarous, ever presented such scenes of horror."

Two comments remain to be made upon this desolating epoch. First, the best land, and not always the most suitable, was devoted to pasturage, but by no means the best results have occurred. The graziers have not seized their opportunities. Belgium, for example, with one-eleventh only of pasture lands compared with Ireland, actually produces one-third the number of cattle. Now, there are two branches of cattle-breeding: the "raising" and the "fattening." The former is the least remunerative and the most exhausting to the land; the latter not only pays best, but actually fertilises the land. Yet Irish graziers have chosen the least remunerative form although they have the best land in Ireland. Further, the trade is precarious. If and when England opens her market to Argentine and Canadian cattle "on foot," it may actually involve the ruin of Irish cattle-breeding.

The second comment is a simple affirmation that, socially and economically, tillage in Ireland is more desirable than pasturage.

But although feeling is undoubtedly strong against the disproportionate use of pasture land, it is necessary to remember that both classes of tenant have equally suffered by the unjust laws of tenure.

At this period of anguish, when the Irish

peasant, leaden-footed, was passing through every circle of the Inferno, what did England do ? Her great heart went out in paternal and loving solicitude to the English garrison. It is true that whilst the victims were actually writhing in torture she sent money in charity: charity that not seldom was employed as an instrument of proselytism—a form of criminal Christianity from which the Quakers, to their eternal credit, were entirely exempt. But of justice, equity, England would not hear. The truth is that England in her heart of hearts believed these peasants to be little better than savages, and was not sorry to be rid of them. The Irish landlord class she liked even though she did not understand them—a class, heads and cadets, that were notorious in every capital of Europe as cadgers, gamesters, and roués. In 1845 the Devon Commission had already reported in favour of compensation for permanent improvements. In 1850 the Tenants' League was formed, including both northern and southern farmers. They based their claim very much on the findings of the Devon Report, and demanded the recognition of tenant-right. "Tenant-right," said Lord Palmerston, remembering his Irish friends and relations—deep calling unto deep—"Tenant-right is landlord-wrong." Then he subscribed

five guineas to the purse for the Sayers-Heenan prize-fight, his duty nobly accomplished.

What then is the essence of tenant-right ? In what way does Irish differ from English tenure ? It is essential that English readers should clearly understand this point, or they can never really understand the Irish agricultural problem. An English landlord does not merely let the land to the farmers ; he lets the farm as a going concern. An Irish landlord only lets the land. An English landlord will erect buildings or effect repairs ; this is contrary to Irish practice. It is the Irish tenant who builds, repairs, fences and drains. The Irish landlord, therefore, occupies a position almost analogous to the ground landlord in an English town. But he gives no long leases, and prior to Gladstonian legislation the value of the tenant's improvement became his perquisite by the very simple process of raising the rent. Thus it is not surprising that a Scottish landlord like Mr Balfour could say with a full heart : " I can imagine no fault attaching to any land system which does not attach to the Irish system. It has all the faults of a peasant proprietary, it has all the faults of feudal landlordism, it has all the faults incident to a system under which the landlords spend no money on their property,

and under which a large part of the land is managed by a Court ; it has all the faults incident to the fact that it is to the tenant's interest to let his farm run out of cultivation as the term for revising the judicial rent approaches."

If, then, England could not be moved by the horrors of the famine, what finally induced Parliament to act ? There is not the shadow of a doubt about it : the Fenian movement and the Irish Land League. Even in 1860 the position was not understood, or Deasy's Act—a piece of colossal ineptitude—would never have been passed. Prior to this Act the legal position of the tenant was held to be founded not upon contract but upon tenure, or, as an Englishman would phrase it, "the custom of the trade." Deasy's Act abolished "tenure" in this sense, putting landlord and tenant upon a basis of free contract. The farmer could be expelled for non-payment of rent by a mere process of ejectment, and actually, but I believe unintentionally, the farmer's improvements on the land were, in effect, confiscated. Of course, the situation was an impossible one, although, luckily, Deasy's Act became almost a dead letter. Another decade was destined to pass before Gladstone brought in his Land Act of 1870. It did not carry matters very far, but it legalised the "Ulster Custom,"

and extended the benefits of the Ulster Custom to other tenants. The Ulster Custom dates from James I., and is the survival of rights given to the "planters." It recognises free sale, fixity of tenure, and fair rent: precisely those tenant-rights which the egregious Palmerston had denounced as landlord-wrongs. But the Act was tentative, indirect, and abortive. It was passed *in terrorem*, the Fenians being at the gate.

From 1870 to 1886 bill after bill was introduced by Irish members to impart some reality to Irish land legislation. During that period thirty-two bills were rejected. In such circumstances he was a poor Irishman who was not a rebel.

Irish agriculture touched bottom in 1880, when Parnell advised the tenants to "keep a firm grip on their homesteads." Isaac Butt was the last Irish political leader who believed that Parliament could be moved by wheedling. Parnell, made of sterner stuff, decreed a land war, and took care to make it effective. The result was instantaneous: Gladstone brought in his Land Act of 1881, modified and amended by the Acts of 1882, 1887, 1891, 1896, culminating in the Act of 1903, which in its turn had sprung out of the Ashbourne Act of 1885. In that body of legislation is to be found the *magna charta* of the Irish farmer.

The Land Act of 1881 is probably Gladstone's

greatest legislative achievement. It was courageous and comprehensive, and laid the foundations of subsequent measures. It had grave defects : it did not deal with arrears ; it omitted from its scope the leaseholders, numbering more than 30,000 ; and, singularly enough, it provided no basis for the valuation of fair rents. The subsequent Acts to which I have referred remedied these defects.

But when all is said against the Act, it nevertheless remains a monumental and epochal event in English and Irish history. It established the principle of dual ownership. It legally recognised the cardinal fact that in this partnership the landlord provided the land and the tenant did the rest. From this flowed all. If the tenant did not default, he had security of tenure. But security of tenure is obviously contingent upon a fair rent. Very good. If landlord and tenant cannot agree, then the State will fix a judicial rent for fifteen years, after which it may again be revised. To that end a new judicial authority was set up, and known as the Land Commission. This body, once established, promptly knocked off 20 per cent. from existing rents, which put an annual £1,500,000 extra into the pocket of the tenant. The "judicial" tenant can no longer be evicted save for statutory

default ; but he must not sublet or subdivide ; he must provide against dilapidation ; he must not oppose the landlord in the exercise of his remaining rights, such as shooting and fishing or the working of mines and minerals. Further, the tenant who fails to pay his rent has still an armoury in reserve : he cannot be actually evicted for six months, during which period he may buy back his holding. On default, the landlord serves notice to quit not less than six weeks after the decree of ejectment. After this, for six months the tenant is legally a caretaker or guardian, but during that period his right of sale or redemption remains alive. The net result of the Act may be briefly stated. On March 31, 1901, no less than 360,135 tenants had obtained a judicial rent—an average reduction of 20·7 per cent. on a total rental of £5,715,158. On this date 120,515 tenants had applied for a second-term rent and had obtained a further reduction averaging 19·7 per cent. on £1,728,600. The first-term rents work out at about 12s. an acre ; second-term rents at 10s. an acre.

It is not necessary to analyse the subsequent amendments ; the principle of the Act remained. But it will not escape notice that this class of legislation presupposes continued tenancy and continued rent, whereas the ambition of the

tenant throughout had been and is land purchase on an equitable basis. It would be imperative to criticise the working of the 1881 Act in much closer detail were it not that the Acts of 1885 and 1903 have made land purchase the dominant issue. It is well, however, to remember that land purchase is necessarily a slow operation, and that pending the completed purchase the tenant is still paying a judicial rent. The interpretation of the Act of 1881 by the Land Commission has in many ways adversely affected the interests of the tenants, and the feeling is almost universal that the rent reductions have not been liberal enough. It is pointed out by the discontented tenants that during the same period English farmers have obtained even greater reductions, notwithstanding the fact that the English farmer has no claim on the gear of the farm, whilst the Irish tenant is a dual owner. As an advance on the ante-1881 period the Act has worked marvels, but even yet the Irish tenantry have not obtained a strictly equitable rent. Indeed, it was the discontent and general dissatisfaction caused by the working of the 1881 Act that led to legislation providing for purchase. Nobody has confidence in the findings of the Land Commission. But there is a more fundamental objection to the Act. M. Paul-Dubois states it succinctly :—

“It is an unhealthy system, unsound both economically and socially, this dual ownership which turns the landlord and tenant into co-proprietors of the soil. It paralyses agriculture by preventing the investment of capital on either side, and by destroying all interest of either landlord or tenant in the good farming of the land. The landlord feels himself no longer called upon to do anything for his property, and has no care left but that of collecting his rents. The tenant, on the other hand, refrains from making any improvement or advances that might cause his rent to be raised at the next quinquennial revision; the land is thus starved both of labour and capital.”

The next stage, then, in this drama was to pave the way for land purchase.

The idea was no new one. In 1847 Lord John Russell advocated a peasant proprietary for Ireland. So did John Stuart Mill. Under the Church Act of 1869 John Bright actually secured the right of pre-emption for the tenants of ecclesiastical land, of which 6000 tenants took advantage. The Land Act of 1870 provided for an advance of two-thirds of the purchase money to purchasing tenants, and 1000 tenants accepted its terms. The Act of 1881 provided for three-quarters of the purchase money, repayable by thirty-five annual instalments at 5 per cent. per annum. Another 1000 tenants bought their land on these terms.

Then came the Ashbourne Act of 1885, the true parent of modern land purchase. The Treasury was to advance *the whole* of the purchase money, up to £5,000,000 out of the Church Surplus Fund, repayment over forty-nine years, at 4 per cent.—£2, 15s. interest on the advance, and £1, 5s. sinking fund for liquidation. Prices ruled low, averaging about seventeen and a half years' purchase. By 1891, £10,000,000 assigned to this purpose had been exhausted and 25,367 tenants had become occupying owners. In 1891 Mr Balfour authorised the provision of £33,000,000 for the purpose. The whole of the money was to be advanced by the State by the issue of guaranteed land stock at $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent., repayment by the purchaser in forty-nine years at 4 per cent. Under this plan 30,000 more sales were effected. The Treasury, however, paid the landlords, not in money, but in land stock, which at that time was quoted above par. But after the Transvaal War the price fell from 110 to 90. Then the landlords had no further interest in selling, and a general cessation of sales ensued. Under the Acts of 1869, 1870, 1881, 1885, 1891, 1896, the total number of occupying owners had reached 73,917, the total amount advanced being £24,309,098.

Meantime, in Ireland political and social com-

plications were quickly modifying the situation. In 1900 came in the reunion of the Irish members, and for two years quite a stirring land war followed—a vivid reminder to English statesmen that Ireland's needs were urgent and that delay was dangerous. To the landlords was flashed the warning that, owing to their dilatory tactics, the question of compulsory purchase might suddenly assume practical shape. The new campaign was simple as it was effective. Remember that the increments that the occupying owners were paying the Government were considerably less than the judicial rents paid by the tenants, who in any event were gravely dissatisfied with their Land Court reductions. Therefore it was decided to approach the landlords and give them the option either of selling or reducing rents to the level of the increments that were being paid by the occupying owners. "Sale or reduction! Take your choice, or——" Nor was this all. The Presbyterian farmers had tasted blood, and claimed prompt purchase in no uncertain terms—voluntary if possible; otherwise, compulsory. Concurrently, a campaign against congestion and excessive grazing seemed likely to set the heather ablaze throughout Ireland. It seemed just like old times. But this new campaign caught the landlords in two

minds. The Abercorn section were all for accepting the gage of battle, and proceeded to form an Irish Land Trust to provide the sinews of war. On the other hand, the Dunraven section strongly favoured conciliation, and advocated some practical solution of what was obviously an anomalous situation. Certainly, the last thing they wanted was to see the element of compulsion make its way into practical politics. The upshot of it all was the "Dunraven Conference," to which, as representing the tenants, went Messrs T. W. Russell, John Redmond, William O'Brien, and T. Harrington. The landlords were represented by Lord Dunraven, Lord Mayo, Col. Hutcheson Poë, and Col. Nugent Everard. The crux of the problem was to discover a substitute for "compulsion." Now, there is only one inducement that would influence any Irish landlord to do something which otherwise he would have to do under compulsion—and that is good, honest English gold. This principle was therefore accepted *nem. con.*, and doubtless with much suppressed enthusiasm, by the landlords present. But how were they to find the money? Nothing easier—it was a pity nobody had thought of it years ago—a bonus for the landlord over and above the value he was receiving for his land—just a little 10 or

12 per cent. *douceur* "to make face," as they say in China. It was not the money they were thinking of—no Irish gentlemen would dream of such a thing,—but just a little recognition of the unfortunate position in which the landlords found themselves. The tenants' representatives were, of course, delighted to see any scheme which would put money into their friends' pockets, provided the tenants didn't pay it. Somebody suggested the Treasury. "Of course! Who else?" This point of punctilio being satisfactorily settled, the Conference proceeded to discuss the case of the tenants.

V

IRISH AGRICULTURE (continued)

THE signatories to the Dunraven Convention were destined to discover in the fulness of time that a raid on the British Treasury is a task which, even if successful, generally brings in its train unexpected and embarrassing results. The truth is that the Treasury is not such a fool as it looks. But undoubtedly the Dunraven Convention paved the way for the Land Act of 1903—a measure, in its own way, as great and as far-reaching as Gladstone's Act of 1881. There can be no doubt that had there been no Dunraven Conference the Government would have been faced with two sinister alternatives—either to prepare for a bitter and ruthless land war in Ireland, or with greater or less courage and more or less graciously to accept the abhorrent principle of compulsory purchase. It is futile to speculate on what might have been, but I believe the Irish tenants would to-day be in a far stronger

position had they declined the landlord's bonus and forced the issue of compulsion. There can be but little doubt that had they "sat tight" they would have won. Not that there were not substantial considerations in favour of compromise: the tenants were hungrily in a hurry to secure their holdings, and there was some chance of bringing a considerable section of the landed gentry into more sympathetic relations with the national cause. Both these objects have been partially—but only partially—obtained. On the other hand, discontent has been bred amongst the western peasantry, and Ireland ultimately found itself saddled with the entire cost of the whole financial transaction. It is morally certain that the British Treasury will always contrive to say the last word. What it loses in the open, it gets back by a secret and dubious system of book-keeping. The tenants have now learnt to their cost that in supping with landlords or with the Treasury two long spoons are requisite.

Mr Wyndham, the sponsor for the Act, cordially supported by Mr Balfour, had a comparatively easy task so far as the political situation was concerned. The Irish members were friendly, having patched up a temporary peace with the landlords; the Liberal Opposition had no alterna-

tive policy to propound, and was rent with feuds, personal and political. But the measure bristled with difficulties, not mitigated by the knowledge that Mr John Dillon was gravely dissatisfied and would not have regretted a good excuse for wrecking the whole scheme.

The main outlines of Wydham's Act may be briefly summarised. Instead of adopting the principle of compulsion, its underlying idea is optional sale stimulated by a special monetary incentive. The Act does not destroy the older system of purchase incorporated in the Ashbourne Act, but it envelops it in a large network of wider considerations and methods. There are, however, some vitally fundamental changes. Thus the sales must be by estates *en bloc*, and no longer of individual tenancies. Sanction for the sale must be obtained from a new department of the Land Commission, known as the Estates Commissioners, three in number, who are specially designated to administer the Act. These Commissioners must decide what constitutes an estate for the purposes of the Act. To this proviso there is one serious defect and one distinct advantage. The defect is that in any one estate bad land is paid for at the same rate as good land. But, *per contra*, the Estates Commissioners may refuse their sanction to the sale

of the estate if they deem the price too high. To overcome the difficulty of variety of value, the Commissioners have power to resettle the estate in the congested districts—obviously a difficult and delicate duty in which both value and sentiment play their part. Every landlord has power to sell even where the estate is entailed or when superior interests exist, providing he or his predecessors have received rent for a period of not less than six years. This provides the purchaser with a clear title. But this is not as simple as it looks, and without going into details it must be said that many legal difficulties and pitfalls must be surmounted.

The two novel proposals in the Act are the bonus to the landlords and the “zones” system.

The bonus to the landlords is arranged by the Treasury. Over and above the price of the sale, a premium of 12 per cent. on the purchase price is paid in cash to the landlord. As the landlords previously received payment in land stock (which had depreciated owing to the South African War), this constituted a distinct enticement to the landlord. The purchase consideration is, of course, distributed amongst the various holders of any form of lien upon the estate; the bonus is paid to the landlord in person, providing he actually receives some portion of the purchase

money. Thus, broadly stated, the landlords are handsomely bribed in current coin of the realm to give their formal consent to a sale which, to them, may be little else than formal also.

It is extremely difficult to describe succinctly the operation of the "zones" system. To speed up the sales under the Act and facilitate the work of the Estates Commissioners, power is granted to the parties to fix the price between certain maxima and minima. In the case of second-term judicial rents the agreed price must represent a reduction of not less than 10 per cent. and not more than 40 per cent. on the actual rent. That is to say, the annuity payable by the tenant to the Government must be actually not less than 10 per cent. below the rent actually being paid to the landlord. In the case of the first-term rents there must be a reduction of at least 20 per cent. and not more than 40 per cent. on the former rent. If an agreement be reached between landlord and tenant within these specified zones, the Estates Commissioners must sanction the sale without comment, the security being deemed ample. It will be instantly seen, therefore, that where the tenants are impatient to secure their land, there is a strong inducement to settle inside the zone and so avoid the inevitable delay of an inquiry by the Estates Commissioners.

There can be no doubt that the zones system has proved in practice a booby-trap for those whose land hunger has outstripped their discretion. From 1885 to 1903, as we have seen, the average price paid by the tenants was seventeen and a half years' purchase, whereas the minimum price under the zones system (first-term rents) has been eighteen and a half years, and twenty-one and a half years second-term rents. Prices have clearly been artificially and cunningly raised, to the benefit of the landlords.

The financial provisions of the Act are simple. The Treasury may advance a sum up to £100,000,000 at $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. interest, plus $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. sinking fund. To obtain the fee-simple of his land, therefore, the tenant must pay $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. for sixty-eight and a half years. The Treasury on its part has to find the 12 per cent. bonus for the landlord : it is duly set forth in the Act. But what are the facts ? In the accounts for 1909-10 and 1911 (as for previous years) sums respectively of £122,000 and £150,000 are debited exclusively to Ireland under the vote for the Land Commission. What does this mean ? Professor Kettle states it forcibly and accurately :—

“ England had imposed upon us an agrarian economy which had broken down ; England out of her mag-

nanimity confessed her mistake, and out of her beneficence provided funds to amend it. It was a noble spectacle. . . . This is a notably cheap sort of philanthropy. You compose a quarrel with a man by sending him a present of a box of cigars. You have taken the precaution to order them at his tobacconist's and to have them entered to his account. Nothing could be more discreet. But you really must not call it generosity. Either the bonus is, as it was declared to be, an Imperial grant-in-aid, in which event it ought to appear as Imperial expenditure, or else it is a mere fraudulent pretence."

For my part, I do not see what else was to be expected. The bonus, wrapped up in speciously gracious phrases, is undoubtedly an integral part of the land-purchase bargain. The British Treasury has to debit some department with the increased outlay of £12,000,000. There is no philanthropic department in Downing Street—that is reserved for sentimentalists' and social reformers' platform speeches at Christian Conferences,—so there was nothing else to be done. The result is that if and when a financial bargain is struck between England and Ireland, Ireland's land stock debt will be burdened with an extra £12,000,000 (presuming the whole authorised amount to be exhausted), thereby compelling the Irish landless population to contribute 12 per cent. in cash to the occupying owners. The

Connemara peasant helping out the Wexford farmer is neither equitable nor humorous. The average price of land sold under the Wyndham Act is £13, 4s., but with the bonus it mounts up to £15. Thus a present to the landlords of £1, 16s. per acre is made in part at the expense of Irish poverty. Both the bonus and the zones systems have proved a terribly expensive business, whilst even yet it may become an imperative State duty to enforce compulsion. Up to March 31, 1911, the sale transfers under the Act reached the considerable number of 84,349. Evidently, therefore, the Act has proved very popular. The money market has proved unsympathetic.

Although in a certain sense I have had to record a considerable success for the Wyndham Act, I must not be taken as approving the principle of land purchase. It must be admitted that there will in all human probability be further extensions of the principle, and the end no man can foresee.

Briefly stated, the fundamental objections are formidable. In the first place, as already stated, the price paid is far too high, and the margin between the fair price and the actual price will almost certainly become a burden too grievous to be borne. Whereas second-term judicial rents fell 19 per cent. from first-term rents, it

certainly seems preposterous that for purposes of purchase the value of land should advance from seventeen and a half to eighteen and a half years. When, further, we remember that complaints were universal that judicial rents were considered unfair to the tenants, the wonder grows the greater. It is difficult, therefore, to resist the conclusion of many Irish economists that fourteen years' purchase ought to be the real price. The effects of this increased capital burden must be cruelly felt sooner or later. We have already noted how precarious is the cattle-breeding industry. When Argentine cattle come in "on foot," Irish cattle-breeders will go out "on tramp." What will become of the annuities? The difference between a fair price and a forced price cannot fail to be severely felt. The capital value of grazing land will fall with a thud, and another land crisis will stare Dublin in the face. And, looking to reasonable probabilities, must we not assume an agricultural crisis sooner or later? What then will become of the annuities? The tenant has started with far too great an initial outlay: faced with a grazing or agricultural crisis, his back will break, with the result that the Irish taxpayer or ratepayer (both are involved) will be compelled to implement his guarantee.

Nor is this all. Competition is compelling the progressive farmer more and more to invest in agricultural machinery of all kinds. There is clear and disquieting evidence that thousands of farmers have become occupying owners, already stinted for capital before they begin this long and wearisome race of sixty-eight and a half years. To procure machinery, he must either buy it on the hire-purchase system—in which event he is adding to his annual liability ; or hire the machinery—in which event he must pay through the nose ; or pay cash—in which event he denudes himself of his working balance. It is true that the growth of agricultural credit banks will substantially help him ; but they cannot stand too great a strain. Their operations are undoubtedly based upon the working of the land in normal conditions. Further, signs are not wanting that English agriculture is reviving and is gradually adapting itself to modern requirements. It would be a grave mistake to assume that the English farmer as a class is bound to continue hopelessly feudalised. On the contrary, technical knowledge is spreading rapidly in English rural districts, partly by the necessity of complying with conditions imposed by local authorities and partly under stress of French, Danish, Scottish and Irish competition.

In this connection, too, it is well to remember that English railways are waking up to the importance of helping the English farmer, whilst the Irish railways are still pursuing a policy of extortion. Even if the Irish railways should change, Ireland would still be, for a long period, handicapped by the shortage of permanent way and the inadequacy of rolling-stock.

Another factor, as yet barely considered, is the Irish farm labourer. Squeezed out for ever from ownership, employed by a farming class struggling under a tremendous handicap, is it any wonder that his wages are reduced to the absolute minimum standard of subsistence? The continuance in Ireland of an agricultural helot class must be a permanent menace, not only to the farmer, but to town artisans, whose wages will be dragged down in economic sympathy. Thus an ill-paid, ill-fed, landless section of agricultural workers would be also a menace to Irish industrial efficiency. But suppose that an improved system of Irish education stimulates the farm labourer's imagination, is it in the least likely that he will resign himself to hopeless helotry? By no means; another land struggle will ensue—and rightly so,—and once again the Irish farmer-employer will be in difficulties. This

problem of the labourer is no figment of the imagination. M. Paul-Dubois remarks :—

“Agricultural labourers who are neither owners nor cultivators are common enough in Ireland. The exact number is undiscoverable, because statistics make no difference between them and those tenants who, their farms being too small to pay, supplement their profits by hiring themselves as labourers. The ultra-miserable condition of these agricultural labourers, without hearth or home, and, more especially, the frightfully insanitary condition of the hovels in which they are lodged by their employers, have on several occasions provoked legislative intervention.”

Various Acts, culminating in the Agricultural Labourers Act of 1906, have materially mitigated the housing conditions in many districts ; but we must remember that, desirable though better housing may be, the question is only ancillary to the deeper problem of a fair share in the products of the land.

Finally, the Wyndham Act has practically left untouched the “congested” problem in the West. The appalling poverty of that unhappy region still remains apparently as deep-seated as tuberculosis in the body. The agrarian evolution of Connaught, as M. Paul-Dubois appositely observes, “has followed the same course as that in other parts of the country, but it has been

more deeply marked and more tragic." What is this problem of "congestion" which sounds so strangely to English ears when the general impression is that Connaught is depopulated? It is true that at the time of the Great Famine the country was well populated. I have already told the story of the "clearances." The result to-day is graphically described by M. Paul-Dubois :—

"The first point that strikes one throughout the West of Ireland is the twofold characteristic of a general depopulation combined here and there with a sporadic overpopulation. Wherever the soil permits of it, there you may see vast grazing lands empty and bare, carved out into quadrilaterals and enclosed within great dry walls through whose interstices the daylight penetrates as through a piece of lacework. Nowhere is there a living person or a house to be seen. Small black Kerry cows and Roscommon sheep—these are the sole inhabitants of this deserted prairie. But then pass on from the beaten track to the waste lands by the coast or to the rocky parts of the mountain or to the peat bogs on the plain. Here at long intervals you will see masses of hovels glued tightly against each other, very low, and, as it were, half sunk into the ground, with thatched roofs of a rounded shape like the outline of an overturned boat. From a distance one would say that they were merely rocks covered with bushes, a heap of molehills shaped in alternate hollows and hillocks which stand out in grey relief against the

brown background of the horizon. Some of them are mere huts built with dried mud. Even to-day there are still twenty thousand of these mud cabins in Ireland. . . . Thus, on the one hand, we find bare and deserted *latifundia* ; on the other hand, here and there we find human beings herded into what might be called rural slums piled together on waste lands."

This is a full, true, and particular description of what is meant by a "congested" district. It simply means congested population living below the subsistence standard upon uneconomic land. It does not mean that, taken as a whole, the land of Connaught is either congested or uneconomic. The precise reverse is the case. But it most emphatically does mean that Connaught must be resettled on pain of Ireland dying from an economic cancer. Unless resettlement takes place in the near future, land purchase will be vitiated and a land war will be inevitable. Two cardinal facts will illustrate how peculiar is the problem. Official statistics were drawn up about fifteen years ago for the guidance of an inquiry into the condition of the Connaught peasants. The highest annual family receipts of a certain group were set down at £41, and the expenses at £42, 15s. The lowest showed annual receipts £8, 3s., and the expenditure £11, 9s. These latter figures are worth giving in detail:—

Receipts.				Expenditure.			
	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Sale of eggs . .	1	3	0	Rent	1	0	0
Sixty days' wages	3	0	0	Rates and taxes		2	0
Herding cattle .	4	0	0	Food	5	17	0
				Clothing . .		10	0
				Groceries . .	4	0	0
	8	3	0		11	9	0

When thinking of these figures, it is well to remember that this is the annual budget of a man, his wife and children, who belong to our own civilisation. They are not "Hottentots."

The second fact is that out of 109,359 holdings in the province of Connaught, only 21,401 have had their judicial rents fixed for the second term, whilst less than 15,000 have been bought. We may safely assume that this leaves over 70,000 holdings requiring special treatment, derelict human beings vainly striving to subsist upon uneconomic patches of unproductive land. Fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, beaten to the earth, looking not to the land for life, but to the filial piety of sons and daughters crystallised into the shape of money-orders from America. Thus, the Union of Clifden receives through the Clifden Bank over £10,000 every

year, which pays half the rents owing by 3300 families in the district—a typical instance.

Although the Congested Districts Board has power in special circumstances to purchase land compulsorily, its organisation is too small and its legal powers too limited successfully to grapple with so gigantic a problem as the resettlement of Connaught. The bonus system may work—and possibly has worked—magic in the other three provinces; Connaught urgently requires compulsory powers to purchase as a condition precedent to a real economic rearrangement of western holdings. The Congested Districts Board is by law confined to such congested districts as shall include at least 20 per cent. of the population of a county in whose electoral divisions the average ratable valuation is less than 30s. per inhabitant. This means in practice that the Congested Districts Board has power to act over 3,411,000 acres of land out of 20,198,000 acres in Ireland. This involves legal difficulties as to boundaries, and leads to a boundless run on red-tape. I agree with M. Paul-Dubois that the whole of Connaught, plus the counties of Donegal and Kerry, should *sans phrase* be declared officially as “congested.”

But, even if this were done, it would still be true that the Congested Districts Board would be unequal to the task. Its intentions are honour-

able ; it is doing a most valuable work : but the solution of the problem requires special legislation and the official co-operation of the local governing bodies. As indicating how comparatively slow and inadequate are the operations of the Board in the matter of resettlement, it is only necessary to remark that in fifteen years 397,765 acres were purchased, providing means of life for less than 16,000 tenants. But as Connaught alone contains 2,750,000 acres and 110,000 peasant families, the hopelessness of the present situation becomes painfully apparent. During the period that provision was made for these 16,000, nearly 1,000,000 inhabitants from Connaught alone unwillingly emigrated. Expropriation is the first thing necessary ; to these unhappy peasants it is, as Dr Healy, Archbishop of Tuam, said, " a question of life or death."

Nothing could be further from my intention than to write unsympathetically of the Congested Districts Board. It has done extraordinarily useful work in the face of untold difficulties. It has largely revived the fishing industry ; it has established harbours and ports and fishing stations ; it has opened up markets and fitted out boats which it sells on credit to crews whom it has technically trained for the work. In co-operation with the Irish Agricultural Organisa-

tion Society and the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, it has organised agricultural societies and introduced rural and Raffeisen banks. It has developed home and village industries. Donegal is a feather in its cap. There, by judicious subsidies, it introduced new methods of manufacturing homespun. To-day that sterile county sells annually £8000 worth of homespun, and emigration has ceased. In various villages throughout Connaught may be found expert workers in embroidery, Irish lace, Carrickmacross guipure, Limerick or Youghal lace, and rosepoint of Irishmacsaint. It is devoutly to be hoped that before long the head of this department shall be appointed, not for political reasons, but on his merits as an administrator.

Thus, in outline, stands the Irish agricultural problem to-day. The change in its structure and spirit during the past thirty years is a benignant token of hope, of revival, of conquest. Much might be written of the growing co-operation for commercial purposes of Irish farmers : of nearly 400 creameries worked co-operatively ; of 200 country banks with nearly 12,000 members ; of nearly 150 agricultural societies buying co-operatively for their members—decidedly hope and vigour are being manifested where formerly were despair and inertia.

Nevertheless, the Western problem excepted, we may now say that Ireland no longer sues the British Parliament *in forma pauperis*; the bent back of the peasant is straighter, his eyes are clearer, his chest is thrown out. He is a man; he may soon be a strong man, well worth England's care to conciliate and to uphold.

VI

IRISH FINANCE

TRUE equality in taxation, says John Stuart Mill, means equality of sacrifice. Unless the truth of this dictum be firmly grasped, it will be impossible sympathetically to understand the problem of Irish financial relations with Great Britain. I write "sympathetically" advisedly; but it would be easy to argue that to forget Mill's dictum is to fail to understand, sympathetically or otherwise. For it is universally admitted by Irishmen and Englishmen of every shade of political opinion that all is not well between the two countries in the matter of finance.

Another note of warning needs to be sounded. There is a very considerable army of utilitarians and shallow realists who exalt the financial problem to a spurious importance far beyond its intrinsic significance. This school loudly affirms that finance is the main consideration in settling the Irish problem. To argue thus is

not only to proclaim one's moral vulgarity, but to close the heart and intellect to finer issues. Napoleon remarked that every army marched on its belly. But it was not the main object ; the commissariat is only a means to the great end. Finance, therefore, may be regarded as the most important—infinately so—of details : a detail it is and must remain.

With this one definition and one reservation, let us see how financial matters stand between England and Ireland.

Much might be written of Irish finance prior to the Act of Union. One fact only need be stated : in 1800 England was paying in taxation at the rate of £3, 0s. 2d. per head with an accumulated debt of £42, 2s. 10d. ; in the same year Ireland was paying 12s. 1d. per head with an accumulated debt of only £5, 14s. This large disparity in favour of Ireland effectually precluded Pitt and Castlereagh from imposing uniformity of taxation. They wanted to do so, but dared not : all they could do was to pave the way for complete assimilation at some later date. This was contrived by Article 7 of the Act of Union, which provided that when the respective debts of the two countries should come within the ratio of 2 to 15, Parliament should have the right to fuse the two systems of finance and of

taxation—"subject only" (an important and historic reservation) "to such particular exemptions or abatements in Ireland, and in that part of Great Britain called Scotland," as circumstances might dictate. It was and is contended on behalf of Ireland that this exception specifically guarantees her a separate system of taxation. Not only so, but Ireland instantly protested against Article 7 as a whole, denouncing it as oppressive, and emphatically asserting that the ratio of 2 to 15 by no stretch of the imagination could accurately represent the true proportions of the two countries' economic resources, which should have been 1 to 29. But *force majeure* had its own way. Then, adding insult to injury, the British Treasury promptly added to the Irish debt the complete amount of the expenses occasioned by the Act of Union, cynically including a sum of £1,500,000—the amount spent by Castlereagh in bribing votes to secure the Union—plus £2,500,000 for services rendered by partisans of the Union. This was followed by the Napoleonic wars, forcing Ireland to borrow at high rates of interest to pay her quota of the war expenses. By 1817, Ireland's debt had risen to £113,000,000. The figures are instructive :—

1801	.	.	.	Irish debt,	£28,000,000
1806	.	.	.	„	£58,000,000
1811	.	.	.	„	£70,000,000
1817	.	.	.	„	£113,000,000

In 1800 Ireland's taxation was £3,000,000 ; in 1817 it had doubled. Ireland's extremity was England's opportunity ; the ratio of 2 to 15 was realised, and Parliament, in 1817, decreed financial union, amalgamating the two budgets, so that henceforth the receipts and expenditure became a unity, and the Consolidated Fund was called into existence.

Nevertheless, fiscal union was not entirely achieved. Ireland still received certain exemptions and abatements on tobacco, alcohol, stamps, and other inconsiderable items. It was reserved to Gladstone to consummate complete assimilation in 1853. From that date down to to-day, Ireland has paid the same taxes as England ; the poor relation thus being compelled by sacred law to live up to what Professor Kettle calls " the champagne standard."

Now let us apply John Stuart Mill's test of true taxation : What was the sacrifice involved ? Since 1817, Irish taxation has *increased* 170 per cent. per head ; English taxation has *decreased* by 11 per cent. But, it may be urged, the taxation is the same in both countries. Mr Harold

Cox puts it pointedly: the unit of comparison must not be the country but the individual citizen; and since the Irishman pays on the average less than the Englishman, there can be no grievance. He completely and characteristically ignores the burden of sacrifice involved. A moment's thought will show that an identical tax in two different countries with widely differing habits and industries may completely nullify its surface appearance of equality. Indirect and identical taxation can only be equitably levied in two different countries when the articles taxed are consumed in equal proportions. But the point need not be urged, for it is forcing an open door. England allowed judgment to go by default when in 1894 she appointed the Financial Relations Commission, which was charged to inquire into "the principles of comparison and the application of what specific standards the relative capacity of Great Britain and Ireland to bear taxation may be most equitably determined."

The findings of this Committee (1896) mark a new epoch in the financial history of the two countries. The report was practically unanimous, and entirely conceded the Irish case. The Commission found that the Act of Union laid upon Ireland too heavy a burden; that the increased taxation levied upon her in the middle

of the century could not be justified ; that the present taxable capacity of Ireland does not exceed one-twentieth part of that of Great Britain, whereas Ireland actually pays one-eleventh. In figures, this meant that Ireland for eighty years had been annually overcharged to the tune of not less than £2,750,000 per year. Lord MacDonnell summed up the real meaning of these findings in a speech (since republished) at Belfast :—

“ We have Treasury figures showing the contributions paid by Ireland to the Imperial Exchequer in 1820, and for the last year of each subsequent decadal period to 1900. We have also the Treasury yearly figures from 1900 to 1910. Multiplying the decadal figures, except the last, by ten, and allowing for the contributions made in 1817–19 up to date, I make the total of Ireland’s contributions to Great Britain to be £325,000,000. That is with substantial correctness the amount of the tribute which Ireland has paid to Great Britain during the last ninety-three years, and that sum is over and above the cost of Irish administration during that period. The tribute is more than an empire’s ransom.”

If we apply to these figures the true proportion of one-twentieth instead of one-eleventh, it means that Ireland has paid not less than £150,000,000 over and above her fair quota—a price paid in flesh and blood and misery beyond all human estimate. It is a clear case for restitution.

Indeed, no restitution can ever repair a tithe of the irremediable damage thus wrought—we would fain hope, by want of thought and not by want of heart. How is it possible to bleed a poverty-stricken country to the extent of £150,000,000, and yet superciliously blame it for its industrial anæmia? In any event, restitution or no restitution, does it not irresistibly point the way to the urgent necessity for a fundamental change in the governmental system now obtaining in Ireland?

Even if the revelations of the Financial Relations Committee had never been made, and the assumption still held that equal taxation was essentially equitable, it would still be necessary to inquire into Ireland's balance-sheet before discussing any great constitutional change. Since 1890 the Treasury has issued two annual White Papers on Revenue and Expenditure, in which the contributions to revenue and expenditure have been, more or less arbitrarily, allocated to England, Scotland, and Ireland. Up to 1910–11 there has always been a surplus of Irish income over expenditure, but in 1910 this surplus was changed into a deficit of £2,357,500. This deficit is to be partly ascribed to the holding up of income-tax owing to the rejection of the 1909 Budget. The normal payment from Ire-

land would have been £1,200,000, whereas it was actually £451,000, thus reducing the adverse balance to £1,608,500. (It is pertinent to remark that England's deficit for that year was £26,248,155.) But let the figure stand at £1,608,500, which is easily accounted for by the charge of £2,342,000 for Irish old-age pensions. Therefore, say the utilitarians, since Ireland is at last receiving money from England, it would be unwise to stop the flow by the adoption of Home Rule. The argument would be inadmissible in any event, since Ireland does not live by bread alone; but does it stand an impartial investigation on the actual facts?

In my chapter on Irish Waste I comment upon the extravagance of British administration in Ireland, which, upon comparison with England or Scotland, shows an absolute waste of probably £4,000,000 a year. In view of Imperial commitments to the *personnel* of this administration, it is clear that an immediate reduction is impossible; the change could only be brought about gradually. This fact, however, must at the outset be remembered in estimating the true Irish balance-sheet, which cannot, of course, officially take cognisance of undoubted extravagance which would be sharply rectified by an autonomous Government in Dublin. For example, consider

the Irish Constabulary vote. In the White Papers already quoted it is set down at £1,351,500 and entirely debited to Ireland. Yet when Sir Robert Peel established the force in 1846 he specifically declared it to be an Imperial charge. Mr Goschen, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, treated it as such. The normal Irish expenditure on police, as compared with England or Scotland, would be about £400,000. It is clear, therefore, that Ireland is being surcharged nearly £1,000,000. In like manner, the costs of the legal administration are hopelessly and abnormally too high. But it is the Customs Department which is likely to be the real bone of contention. Now, there are no reliable or official figures which give in their entirety the particulars of trans-Channel trade between England and Ireland. Yet there are certain ascertained facts. Thus, the Irish Department of Agriculture gives the under-mentioned articles as consumed in Ireland, but on which the duty was all or in part paid in England :—

Tea, 34,334,832 lbs., about 95 per cent. paid	
duty in Great Britain	£679,544
Sugar, 2,857,832 cwts., about 30 per cent.	
paid duty in Great Britain	78,588
	<hr/>
Carry forward	£758,132

	Brought forward . . .	£758,132
Manufactured	tobacco, cigars, etc., 2,780,944 lbs., all paid duty in Great Britain	741,598
Cocoa, chocolate, etc.,	4,694,696 lbs., all paid duty in Great Britain	29,560
Coffee and chicory,	1,330,560 lbs., all paid duty in Great Britain	8,317
Beer and porter,	156,397 barrels, all paid duty in Great Britain	60,604
Confectionery,	150,993 cwts.	13,840
	Total	<u>£1,612,051</u>

Also 1,305,102 gallons of wine and 912,214 gallons of spirits on which it is impossible to estimate where duty was paid.

The duty on these articles should obviously be credited to Ireland, as should also be the income-tax deducted by joint-stock companies from Irish investors.

There are, of course, certain dutiable articles consumed in England but upon which duty was paid in Ireland.

Making suitable allowances for these, the following table gives the estimated "true" balance-sheet for Ireland for the year 1909-10—the year in which the British Treasury declares Ireland to be in default to the extent of £2,357,500.

APPROXIMATE IRISH BALANCE-SHEET, MARCH 31, 1910.

IRISH FINANCE

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REVENUE.		EXPENDITURE.	
	Collected in Ireland.		
	£		£
Customs	2,611,000	Civil List and miscellaneous	158,500
Collected in Great Britain on articles consumed in Ireland	1,552,000	Local Taxation Account	1,442,500
		Amounts voted by Parliament	7,476,500
Excise	5,420,000	Collection of taxes	270,000
Collected in Great Britain on articles consumed in Ireland	60,000	Post Office	1,365,000
		Surplus to credit	707,600
Less duties paid in Ireland on spirits, etc., consumed in Great Britain	5,480,000		
	2,277,400		
Estate-duty stamps	3,202,600		
Income-tax	1,001,000		
Add deducted in Great Britain from Irish investors, at least	1,019,000		
	200,000		
Post Office	1,219,000		
Crown lands	1,088,000		
	146,500		
	10,820,100		
Add increased Irish taxation imposed by the Budget 1909-10	600,000		
	11,420,100		11,420,100

Two conclusions inevitably follow from these figures and from the findings of the Financial Relations Committee :—

(i.) That Ireland undoubtedly pays her way, even when we include old-age pensions, the Constabulary vote, and the costs of floating the land loan.

(ii.) That Ireland is overtaxed to the extent of at least £2,750,000 a year, as well as wrongly surcharged with items that ought to be an Imperial charge to at least £1,000,000 a year.

From these conclusions is it possible to draw any inference other than this : That it is only by transferring to a responsible Parliament in Dublin the complete charge of finance that this drain upon Ireland's resources can be effectively stopped ?

This brings me to the vital question : In the event of a Home Rule settlement, how should Ireland control her own finances ? Should she have the Customs ? And the Post Office ? And the Civil Service ? In short, does autonomy include finance ?

It is difficult to see any other way out. Ireland's case is that she has been so grievously burdened with misgovernment, of which finance is an important and integral part, that she must now—so far as domestic affairs are concerned—

govern herself. It is conceded that an Irish Parliament must control at least a considerable portion of her income ; but the English mind boggles at the Customs and conjures up visions of a protective tariff against British goods. But the Customs and Excise represent over £7,000,000 out of an income of £11,420,000. It is to be presumed that a final settlement is above all things desirable. How can there be a final settlement if the Irish Parliament is powerless to influence such a large proportion of her revenue ? Constant friction would be inevitable. It would still compel Ireland to live up to "the champagne standard." Further, it would hamper the Irish Government in effecting economies and in a wise expenditure on the revival of her industries, agricultural and urban. It will be answered that Irish members in reduced numbers would sit at Westminster, and would, therefore, influence the casting of the British Budget. In my opinion any such hope would prove illusory. They would be but a fly on the wheel. Nor can Ireland spare her best men. She will have sore need of them. Yet certainly she could not afford to send inferior men to the British Parliament. The best solution is the courageous course. To pick and choose what finances Ireland shall or shall not control is to perpetuate and even

possibly exacerbate the old feud. It is only by absolute control over all her resources that Ireland can successfully cope with existing extravagance on the one hand and existing parsimony on the other. And with absolute financial control the exclusion of Irish members becomes obvious and desirable. In this connection, too, it is almost certain that Protestant Ulster, much though she may hate the prospect of Home Rule, would infinitely prefer that, if it be inevitable, at least that it be thorough and permanent.

To the objection that Irish control of the Customs might ultimately mean fiscal protection, the reply is simple. A clause in the Act could easily define the future fiscal policy to be pursued. Indeed, such a clause will, in any event, become necessary.

Remains the delicate question of restitution. If none be admitted, it is easy to foresee trouble. Of two things one : if Home Rule be denied, then an Irish campaign in favour of restitution will at once unify Ireland and embarrass England. If it be granted, every consideration of policy and prudence demands that Ireland shall begin her new life unhampered by debt and with a balance in hand. Lord MacDonnell suggests £20,000,000. Like a former Indian administrator, is he not astonished at his own moderation ?

VII

IRISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

I HAVE now endeavoured to give the reader a bird's-eye view of economic, industrial, and agrarian Ireland. Before we approach the vital issue of autonomy it is also necessary to see how Irish local government is administered. In Ireland, as in England, there are two local bodies, the County, Urban, or District Councils, and Poor Law Boards. But their history differs materially : the Irish Councils were only formed in 1898 ; the Irish Poor Law Boards have always found themselves confronted with agrarian rather than urban problems.

The story of the Irish Poor Law system is in itself one of the strongest condemnations of blind English rule. In the light of to-day it reads like a solemn extravaganza. At the time that England was contemplating the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1835, the prevailing poverty in Ireland called urgently for administrative ameli-

oration. Accordingly, in 1833, a Commission was appointed to inquire and report. The report was delivered in 1836, and is one of the most remarkable documents ever issued. They definitely decided against the English workhouse system. Their reasons are worth recording :—That whereas the English system was devised to compel the lazy and idle to seek employment which was obtainable ; in Ireland, on the contrary, able-bodied men who were willing and anxious to work, even for twopence a day, were unable to obtain any regular employment whatever. Therefore, said the Commissioners, the true policy in Ireland was to develop her economic resources and at the same time give work to the unemployed. To that end they proposed :—

- (i.) The reclamation of waste land.
- (ii.) The enforcing of drainage and fencing of land.
- (iii.) Building labourers' cottages.
- (iv.) Agricultural instruction.
- (v.) Land reform.
- (vi.) Transfer of powers of Grand Juries to County Boards, together with what is known as "the direct labour " system for county works.
- (vii.) Development of the country by public works.

The Commissioners, however, saw that even

this programme would leave the pathological and penological cases untouched. For the physically and mentally infirm it was recommended that relief should be afforded within and without the walls of public institutions. To accomplish this, it would be necessary to create hospitals and infirmaries, extern attendance, and the supply of food as well as medicine in cases where sick persons were not in a condition to be removed from their homes. Then came a recommendation to establish penitentiaries to which vagrants should be consigned. Nor were deserted children, aged and infirm, orphans, helpless widows, and young children forgotten : they all fell into the scheme.

Please remember that this extraordinary report was penned seventy-six years ago ; with the exception of the Archbishop of Dublin, the Commissioners were all Irishmen. Since then numbers (iii.), (iv.), (v.), and (vi.) have all been realised—as usual, at a frightful moral and financial waste due to English procrastination. Yet this programme is almost on all-fours with modern proposals for the reform of English Poor Laws. It is an undoubted proof of Irish political perspicuity.

But the English Government thought them hopelessly irresponsible, and contemptuously

threw aside the report. Then they sent over one of the English Poor Law Commissioners—a Mr Nicholls, who stayed in Ireland six weeks. This ineffable man not only rejected the Irish proposals, but gave his reasons. “Many sanguine persons,” he wrote, “appear to consider it as the purpose of the Poor Law, not only to relieve destitution, but to eradicate poverty.” Mr Nicholls’s official soul revolted against any such preposterous notion. Then he tells us what he was after : “I assume as the governing principle to be observed in dealing with this portion of the subject that the Poor Law of Ireland should assimilate, in all respects, as nearly as possible to the Poor Law system now established in England.” A typically English assumption ! This assumption, however, does not disclose his whole mind. So far from aiming at economic revival, he says it is part of his plan to detach the Irish peasantry from the soil, which “*is necessary to restore to the landlords the power of doing what they will with their own.*”

Such an avowal nowadays would be regarded as cynical and shocking. It was the current English view in those days, and incidentally throws a flood of light upon the English attitude towards the Great Famine.

Lord John Russell accepted the views of Mr

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Nicholls, and in 1837 introduced and carried into law the Irish Poor Law Act, which was actually drafted by this peripatetic Commissioner. Daniel O'Connell violently opposed the measure, as indeed did nearly all the Irish members.

Of course, the system broke down utterly under the pressure of the Great Famine, which would certainly have been mitigated to an untold extent had Ireland had ten years' working experience of the scheme, or any considerable part of it, adumbrated by the Irish Commissioners. The net result is that Ireland is covered with hideous workhouses, most of which in the country districts stand always more than half empty.

Now let us look at the present finance of this alien institution, foisted upon Ireland against the advice and votes of all responsible Irishmen. Here are the official statistics of poor-relief expenditure for the year 1907 :—

Cost of indoor relief	£456,474
District schools : cost of maintenance	7,918
Boarded-out children : cost of maintenance	16,600
Outdoor relief	198,337
	<hr/>
Carry forward	£679,329

Brought forward .	£679,329
Salaries and rations of officers .	204,307
Institutions for the blind and extern hospitals: cost of such maintenance to Poor Law Guardians	21,175
Medicine in workhouses . .	10,861
Other expenses	125,948
	<hr/>
Total poor relief expenditure .	<u>£1,041,620</u>

The item "Other expenses" includes the cost of the fabrics of the workhouses.

Thus, for every 40s. spent on workhouse relief Bumble receives 20s. And if he were refused his modest pound of flesh a mandamus would promptly curb Irish ingratitude.

It may be said that no such mistake as the foisting of a purely English institution upon Ireland could possibly occur again. Ireland remains sceptical. In 1903 a Viceregal Commission was appointed yet again to consider the Irish Poor Law. The Commissioners visited every union in Ireland, and reported in 1906. They urged the virtual abolition of the English system and a return to the plans of the Commission of 1833. There is unanimous approval in Ireland of this report. But is it to be the old story? The Government has not accepted the report, has in

fact shelved it, pending the report of an English Commission, subsequently appointed. "How long, O Lord, how long?"

After this story of sorry muddlement (in which Ireland has *not* "muddled through all right"), it is a relief to turn to county government, where a more hopeful situation is disclosed.

We have seen that in 1836 the Irish Poor Law Commission recommended the formation of County Boards. Sixty years ago Lord John Russell promised O'Connell to substitute County Boards for the Grand Jury—a nominated body, entirely devoted to landlord and "Garrison" interests. But this Grand Jury system was deeply rooted and had a powerful "pull" in Dublin Castle. It certainly had no intention to go without a struggle. In 1881 the Liberal Government promised reform in the Queen's Speech. *Vox et præterea nihil*. In April 1883 a bill to establish elective County Councils was introduced by the Irish Party and rejected by 231 votes to 58. In 1886 the Conservative Government announced its intention to establish popular local government. The words of Lord Randolph Churchill became famous :—

"The great sign-posts of our policy are equality, similarity, and, if I may use such a word, simultaneity of treatment, so far as is practicable, in the development

of a genuinely popular system of local government in all the four countries which form the United Kingdom."

Two years later the Government redeemed its promise so far as Great Britain was concerned—England in 1888 and Scotland in 1889. Again the Irish Party took the Government at its word and introduced an Irish bill. Mr Balfour opposed it, and it went the way of all other bills introduced by the Irish members. Lord Randolph Churchill, who meantime had resigned, denounced the Government's action as a breach of faith. It was a measure, he said, "to which the Tories were pledged, and which formed the foundation of the Unionist party." Broken pledges to Ireland, however, always leave the British Parliament cold: it is the natural order of things; indeed, good for Ireland, who by this means can mitigate the unnatural optimism of Celtic character. Thus, where Ireland is concerned, to break a solemn engagement becomes a highly moral act and pleasing to Almighty God. Four years afterwards Mr Balfour introduced a Local Government Bill which showed a quaint conception of "equality, similarity, and simultaneity." Simultaneity meant not less than four years; similarity meant a totally different schema; equality was illustrated by a clause which, had it been put in an English bill, would have aroused a storm of

indignation. It provided that, on the petition of twenty ratepayers, a whole Council might be charged with "misconduct," and, after trial by two judges, could be disbanded, the Lord Lieutenant being empowered to nominate, without any form of election, a new Council of a more pliable disposition. It became known as the "put 'em in the dock" clause. *The Times* declared against the bill, and it was finally abandoned. "Simultaneity" was destined to stretch its meaning to ten years.

At long last, in 1898, the Local Government Act was passed, giving democratic control of local administration. County Councils, Urban District Councils, and Rural Councils were set up; the Grand Juries had had their day. Of course, they bargained to the end. The landlord, under the Grand Jury system, paid one-half of the poor-rate, the occupier the other half. The landed interest loudly proclaimed that the new County Councils would infallibly rob them right and left. The tender and beneficent British Government hearkened unto their cry. The landlord's share of the rate was made a charge upon the Treasury, which put annually into the landlords' pockets £350,000 a year. So widespread is British distrust of Irish capacity that the gravest fears were entertained that this experiment would fail.

Perhaps in many quarters the wish was father to the fear. But the Cassandras have been confounded ; Irish local government has proved a triumphant success.

It was confidently anticipated that the new Councils would be wildly extravagant. They have been economical almost to the point of meanness. They are poor people, and they appreciate the value of money. Further, there were many administrative arrears to be made good, and it would not have been surprising to see greatly increased expenditure for perfectly legitimate purposes. Also, they had to carry the burden of the old extravagantly paid officialdom of the Grand Jury system. They were also financially responsible for the alien Poor Law administration. What financially is the result ? In only one county has there been a heavy advance in rates, and that was due to abnormal causes. In eight counties, otherwise, was there any rise at all, and they varied from 2d. to 5d. in the £. The financial administration of Irish county government is so significant that it may be set out in detail :—

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TABLE I.—Showing the Average Rate levied on AGRICULTURAL LAND in each County, and in the whole of Ireland, during each year from 1899–1900 to 1906–7, and the Average of the Annual Levy for the Eight Years.

Counties.	1899	1900	1901	1902	1903	1904	1905	1906	Average rate for eight years.
	to 1900	to 1901	to 1902	to 1903	to 1904	to 1905	to 1906	to 1907	
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Antrim	2 9	1 6	2 2	2 3	2 3	2 5	2 4	2 3	2 2
Armagh	1 7	2 1	1 5	2 2	1 10	2 3	2 1	2 2	1 11
Carlow	1 11	2 4	2 4	2 1	1 11	2 1	1 9	2 1	2 1
Cavan	2 4	2 8	1 9	2 1	1 7	1 8	1 1	2 2	1 11
Clare	4 4	2 11	2 11	3 1	3 7	3 1	2 11	2 9	3 2
Cork	3 10	2 9	2 9	2 10	3 0	2 5	2 1	2 8	2 9
Donegal	3 7	3 3	2 5	3 3	3 3	3 1	3 6	3 6	3 3
Down	1 8	2 2	1 9	1 8	1 10	2 0	2 1	2 1	1 11
Dublin	3 0	3 1	3 2	3 3	2 11	2 9	2 9	3 0	3 0
Fermanagh	1 11	2 3	1 8	1 11	2 0	1 10	2 1	2 1	2 0
Galway	3 4	2 6	2 8	2 4	3 1	1 10	2 1	3 2	2 7
Kerry	5 3	3 10	3 2	3 8	3 8	3 7	3 7	3 9	3 10
Kildare	2 0	2 2	2 0	1 11	1 9	2 0	1 9	1 9	1 11
Kilkenny	2 10	2 9	2 1	2 3	2 3	2 4	2 8	2 8	2 6
King's Co.	2 2	2 6	2 1	2 2	2 0	2 2	1 8	1 8	2 1
Leitrim	2 8	2 3	3 0	2 1	2 3	2 8	3 0	3 4	2 8
Limerick	2 8	3 3	3 2	2 11	3 1	2 7	3 0	3 4	3 0
Londonderry	2 9	2 4	2 0	1 7	2 7	2 4	2 1	2 1	2 3
Longford	3 0	2 8	2 5	2 9	2 1	2 3	2 10	2 3	2 6
Louth	2 7	2 10	2 5	1 11	1 9	2 0	2 4	2 3	2 3
Mayo	1 6	5 0	2 1	2 3	2 1	2 11	3 2	3 5	2 10
Meath	2 1	1 6	1 1	1 7	1 11	1 9	1 10	1 6	1 8
Monaghan	2 2	1 10	2 4	1 3	2 1	1 11	1 6	1 8	1 10
Queen's Co.	1 8	2 5	2 2	2 3	1 11	1 11	2 0	2 2	2 1
Roscommon	2 5	2 1	2 4	1 11	2 1	2 1	2 0	1 11	2 1
Sligo	2 11	2 2	2 6	3 4	2 9	2 7	2 9	2 4	2 8
Tipperary, N.R.	2 6	2 1	2 0	1 11	1 10	1 11	2 0	2 0	2 0
Tipperary, S.R.	2 6	2 3	2 2	2 0	1 8	2 2	2 3	2 4	2 2
Tyrone	2 3	2 4	2 6	2 7	2 10	2 6	2 9	2 7	2 6
Waterford	3 4	2 2	2 9	2 6	2 3	2 8	2 7	2 7	2 7
Westmeath	2 3	2 0	2 5	2 6	2 5	2 2	2 1	1 11	2 3
Wexford	2 1	2 11	2 4	2 2	2 6	2 5	2 1	2 3	2 4
Wicklow	3 2	2 3	2 3	2 3	1 8	2 1	2 0	2 6	2 3
Average rate in each year for all the Counties	2 8	2 6	2 4	2 4	2 4	2 4	2 4	2 5	2 5

[illegible]

It only remains to be said that during the same period there was an increase of £825,000 in Imperial taxation, or nearly 10 per cent. of the whole amount levied. Efficiency has marched with economy : it is admitted, not only by the Irish Local Government Board, but by men of all parties. Certainly a mere average reduction in the rates is not the final test ; it might even become a grim proof of rank inefficiency. But, in this instance, there can be little doubt that the duties legally and morally appertaining to local government have been carried out with great thoroughness, understanding, and sympathy, whilst public interest has been kindled to a heat unrealisable in Great Britain.

English readers will wonder why nothing has been said of primary and secondary education. " Surely," they will say, " the local authorities have something to do with education." The answer is a sad negative. Lord Randolph Churchill's promise of similarity and simultaneity remains unfulfilled. England's imposition of her Poor Law system on Ireland is an inconsiderable injury compared with her monstrous treatment of education in Ireland. The story of Irish education is probably the story of Ireland's gravest tragedy. Let M. Paul-Dubois bear witness :—

“Ireland’s greatest danger, therefore, lies in her mental and moral decadence, and let me say at once that this decadence is to a great extent the fruit of oppression. I have already spoken of the effect which the penal laws of the eighteenth century produced on Ireland. Following as they did upon many centuries of war and massacre, and aided in all their work by emigration, they brought Ireland to a state of extreme exhaustion. England thoroughly understood what she was doing: she struck at the brain of Ireland; demoralised her, sacked and ruined the national mind. The fatalism, the moral inertia and intellectual passivity, the general absence of energy and character, of method and discipline, which we remark in the Ireland of to-day, are to be ascribed to this cause. Psychologically and materially, Ireland has seen all her worth and substance drained away, until nothing of any value is left to her.”

This is, perhaps, too sweeping a verdict, but substantially it would be hard to repel.

Nor will it be denied that the Irish educational system is one of the worst ever devised; it is a vain and inglorious attempt to vivify young Ireland from the tomb of the evil past. The icy fingers of the dead hand are placed on the brow of the Irish child, who thus tragically early enters into his *hereditas damnosa*. Yet the Irish thirst for knowledge is known to all men. Even under the Penal Laws this thirst sought to

be slaked in the "hedge-schools" of the eighteenth century—a task fraught with greater difficulty and danger than educating a Russian peasant. Later came the work of the religious orders—the Christian Brothers, the Brothers of St Patrick, and others. The Christian Brothers' Order was founded in 1802 by Ignatius Rice to give to the poor a Catholic education. It now possesses over 300 schools, with over 30,000 pupils, and is obviously an important factor in the problem. It now receives a capitation grant.

The present system was inaugurated in 1833. It placed the control of education under a purely nominated "National Board," which from the beginning has been under official and Protestant domination, although the Catholic population is as 4 to 1. Although officially holding an even hand between Catholic, Episcopalian, and Presbyterian, this Board in its earlier days was an Anglicising agency first and an educational machine second. On its formation, Dr Whately, Archbishop of Dublin, became its most powerful member. He made no bones about his object. A grimly humorous incident illustrates his methods. From the reading-books first published he deleted Campbell's "Downfall of Poland" and Scott's "Breathes there a man with soul so dead," because these lines might stir up an un-

desirable national sentiment. The worthy Archbishop, seeking to cure souls, substituted some modest lines of his own, notably :—

“ I thank the goodness and the grace which on my
birth have smiled,
And made me in these Christian days a happy
English child.”

It was in this atmosphere that the National Board began its work ; the tradition even yet lingers like the deathly odour of a sepulchre. Its formal method was to declare its policy to be strictly undenominational—and this in the very teeth of both Catholics and Protestants, who both believed in the need for a bond between education and religion. But the Board's object was mixed education, because it was thought that this would help in the process of Anglicisation. “ I believe,” said Dr Whately, “ that mixed education is gradually enlightening the mass of the people, and that if we give it up we give up the only hope of weaning the Irish from the abuses of Popery.” Let us hope that this man's other beliefs were based on something more enduring. Of course, it failed. In 1905 the Commissioners of National Education reported that out of 8659 schools only 2762 were “ mixed.” Broadly, 4000 schools are exclusively attended by Catholics and 1000 by Protestants. All this

commotion was doubtless interesting, and even exciting, to the priests of all the Irish religious communities; but what was fun to them was death to the child. What would be the result to-day had all the nervous energy wasted on religious struggles—pull Protestant, pull Catholic—been fruitfully applied to education? The actual result is that, whilst Archbishop Whately's prayers have been seemingly disregarded in the Celestial High Court, illiteracy in Ireland is 13·7 per cent. Whilst the children in Scottish schools attend on 85 per cent. of the days open, in England 84 per cent., in Ireland it is only 65 per cent. It will be readily understood that just as the pupils are starved, the teachers are stinted. Men teachers begin at £56 per annum; women teachers at £44. Two-thirds of them receive less than 30s. a week. The average Scottish payment is 75 per cent. higher than this; in England it is 48 per cent. higher. But the Irish education officials are not so modest. They are numerous; their duties overlap; there is no order and no cohesion. This will be more easily appreciated by the simple statement that

FOR EVERY £1 SPENT BY EXCHEQUER

*In England and Wales, 17s. goes to education
and 3s. to administration and inspection.*

In Scotland, 16s. 2d. goes to education and 3s. 10d. to administration and inspection.

In Ireland, 13s. 6d. goes to education and 6s. 6d. to administration and inspection.

Secondary, intermediate, and technical education are in like manner divorced from popular control; and although the administrations of these higher grades are somewhat better than the primary, they do not approach the British standards.

I have now briefly sketched three departments of local government—or what ought to be local government in the British sense. We have seen that two out of these three departments are British in their administration, and are utter and undeniable failures; whilst the other department—municipal and rural government, which are democratically controlled—is admittedly a pronounced success. Ireland, in claiming national autonomy, can point to these, emphatically proclaiming to England the historic “*De te fabula narratur.*”

VIII

THE "CASTLE" AND THE "COLONY"

HITHERTO I have dealt with the Irish people as though they were a unified whole, presenting a unified front and acting as a nation. Unfortunately both for Great Britain and Ireland, this is not the case, for we must take into consideration two small sections who have hitherto maintained a Celtophobe attitude and have always resolutely opposed any grant of autonomy to Ireland. It is too readily assumed, however, that the Unionist minority in Ireland is, in its turn, equally a united whole. This is far from being the case. Recent events have proved that, however much both the Unionist sections are agreed in apparently ineradicable fear and distrust of Roman Catholic Ireland, economic and philosophic fissures exist. Thus the official classes, commonly known as "the Garrison," seek not merely to maintain the Act

of Union, but also to Anglicise Irish thought and habits. They are thinly spread all over Ireland, living by themselves and to themselves, cut off almost as much from the Presbyterian colonists as from the native Irish. They derive their inspiration, their strength, and their protection from Dublin Castle. On the other hand, the Protestant colonists are farmers, manufacturers, and merchants, who prefer the *status quo*, and who desire to be left alone so that they may pursue their various avocations. They are bound to the official "Ascendancy" by a negation; their positive interests are not identical, and have proved to be actually antagonistic in the matter of land purchase. Further, blunders in administration, waste in administration, blind fatuity of policy, hit the colonist quite as hard as the aboriginal. The Unionist landlord exacts rents with equal pertinacity from his Protestant and from his Catholic tenantry. "The Pope of Rome may be a terrible fellow," said Protestant John Mitchel, "but he has no writs out in Ulster." The origins of these two Unionist sections are historically different. The "Garrison" is composed of the landlords, who come down from the English conquerors, the actual inheritors of confiscated lands. With them are the land agents, the officials, the lawyers, pro-

fessors, and the upper middle-classes. Through Dublin Castle they dominate the Bench and the Bar ; they send their sons and daughters to Trinity College, Dublin. They are Episcopalian in religion. Their manners are arrogant ; they are the conquering class. But their status has been immensely modified by the grant of democratic local government and the Land Purchase Act. Formerly, as the Grand Jury, they had complete control over local administration, assessing the rates and appointing their own friends as officials. As landlords their economic power was first curbed by the Land Acts of 1870 and 1881 ; it was smashed by the Land Purchase Acts of 1886 and 1903. But much of their social influence remains. They still possess their mansions and demesnes. They still remain the aristocratic and rich class. In a poor country like Ireland this necessarily counts for much. Nevertheless, much of their glory has departed. M. Paul-Dubois describes their present posture :—

“ The worm-eaten edifice has more than half crumbled to pieces already. You may see as you go through the country many a mansion shut up or falling into ruins that was but a little while ago a bustling centre of life and luxury. They stand there as the last witnesses of the fêtes and follies of the past. Within, perhaps, the present landlord drags out a miserable and desolate

existence, like some old half-pay officer. He has no relations with the people, and no hopes of improvement, but he continues bound by the chain forged by his ancestors or by himself in the days of splendour—the chain of poverty. . . . No one in Ireland any longer defends ‘the Garrison’ as an institution, and when they are gone no one will regret them. Even in England, except in the Upper House and amongst the Tories, there is no pity or sympathy with this class, which, nevertheless, has given the Empire some of its greatest sons, from a Napier and a Wellesley to a Dufferin and a Lord Roberts. Their part is played; there is nothing left them to do.”

But if they have had their day, they have also had their pound of flesh. Certainly Ireland owes them nothing. Lecky described their titles and their parchments as for the most part connected “with memories not of honour but of shame.” “The Irish landlords,” said Froude, “in their dealings with their tenants have been little better than skilful thieves.” Lord Dufferin said in the House of Lords, “There are men possessing property, in whose honour, in whose sense of justice, in whose compassion, I for one, my lords, have no confidence whatever.” Their fathers ate sour grapes, and their own friends have thus written their epitaph.

Altogether different is the story of Presbyterian Ulster. They are the Scottish part of Ireland,

dating from James I., when their ancestors were “planted.” They are still known as “planters.” They continued to pour into Ulster during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Under William III. and his immediate successors over 80,000 Scottish families settled there. Very soon they, too, were persecuted by the Ascendancy, the Established Church exacting its tithes just as though they were Catholics. All official positions were closed against them; they were oppressed by the Anglican landlords. Soon they were in despair: a great number emigrated to America, becoming an important factor in the War of Independence; others became active rebels at home, setting the Catholics an example by forming secret societies. They revolted against “the Castle,” against tithes, and against rent. Experience has taught them that a Protestant love of God does not render them immune against rent. Then they co-operated with the Catholics. The “United Ireland” movement of 1792-1798 was largely engineered by Protestants. But at every political turn, when there seemed any chance of united action between oppressed Catholics and Protestants, the drum ecclesiastic was promptly sounded by the Ascendancy, and religious rancour submerged economic and political wrongs. The Act of Union finally rallied

Protestant Ulster against Catholic Ireland ; the British régime became the bulwark of landlord and Presbyterian combined. In this connection, however, it must be remembered that these agricultural and industrial Protestants hated the Irish Parliament and gladly welcomed its dissolution. They directed their attack against the landlords and the Established Church, whose tithe exactions embittered them.

Thus we see that North-East Ulster for two centuries has been a problem peculiar to itself. A strong strain of Radicalism runs through it to-day, just as in the eighteenth century, sharply differentiating it from the Castle section, with whom its political connection is purely fortuitous. As a matter of historic fact, Ulster was largely, if not predominantly, Liberal down to 1880, when it revolted against Gladstonian legislation.

It will hardly be denied that Protestant Ulster has thriven under the Union, though it by no means follows that it would not equally thrive under Irish autonomy. The qualities of this colony of granitic Scots make for commercial success. They are dour fighters, and their financial integrity ranks second to none. It was fortunate for them that England never cast greedy eyes at the linen industry, or it would indubitably have met with the same fate as

Irish wool and other native products. Belfast shipbuilding has grown to huge dimensions, but there was never any danger that England would dam up Belfast Lough. It is probable that the success of both these great trades has no connection one way or another with the Act of Union. Lord Pirrie, the head of the shipbuilding industry, favours Home Rule. His is the first signature to a significant manifesto, issued in December 1910 by Ulster Protestants :—

“ In our opinion the time has at length arrived when the question of self-government for Ireland—the fierce battleground of a hundred years’ ceaseless strife—can and will be wisely settled with a due regard to the Unity and Integrity of the Empire on the one hand, and to the just desires and aspirations of the Irish people on the other. . . .

“ Nor can any man exaggerate the importance of that settlement to our country. For nearly a century the question of Home Government has barred with triple steel every door of progress. It has paralysed the energies of the country and diverted the current of national activity into the unfruitful channel of incessant political struggle. But, indeed, it could not fail to do otherwise. For a hundred years the vast body of the Irish people have had neither sympathy with nor confidence in the Executive and Administrative Government of Ireland. That Government has no natural root in the soil of Ireland. Bureaucratic government cannot soar on ampler wing. Forty-two

Boards without correlation or connection, and almost without responsibility, control the destinies of Ireland. As Liberals, we prefer the Government of the People. Circumstances and conditions have greatly changed since 1895. The question of Higher Education has been definitely solved and permanently settled. The greater part of the land of Ireland has passed into the hands of the tenants, and the history of landlordism has reached its concluding chapter. Serious crime as a consequence is practically unknown. But most important of all, twelve years' administration by Irish County Councils has proved by its wisdom and integrity and even-handed justice the claims of Irishmen to manage their own internal affairs. . . .

"You will remember that Lord Salisbury declared that he would prefer Home Rule for Ireland to the system of Local Government which has since proved so successful. Events have falsified his prophecy, and demonstrate that they who trust their countrymen are the best friends of their country. For our part, zealous Protestants as we are, we have perfect confidence in our Catholic fellow-countrymen. In the south and west of Ireland goodwill and brotherly kindness are universal. Religious dissensions are unknown. We confess with shame that it is only in Protestant Ulster that intolerance and bigotry have a vigorous growth."

It is no exaggeration to declare that the issue of such a document as this ten years ago would have been unthinkable.

The reputation of the real Ulsterman is sadly misrepresented and obscured by the undue attention given in England to the bombastic pronouncements and foolish gasconading of the “Orangemen.” This noisy and irresponsible body dates back to 1795, when, in September of that year, after a fight with Catholics at the “Diamond” near Armagh, the first body was founded avowedly to drive the Catholics from the province of Ulster. They proved themselves a useful tool in the hands of Dublin Castle. But this did not deter the Protestant Grattan from denouncing them as “a banditti of murderers, committing massacre in the name of God, and exercising despotic powers in the name of liberty.” After passing through a number of more or less discreditable vicissitudes, it was reconstituted in 1845, its membership having ten years previously reached about 200,000. To-day it probably does not possess 10,000 members, who live upon its early reputation, making up in noise what it has lost in moral and numerical strength. It is led by a few of the “gentility,” its *personnel* being mainly composed of Protestant riff-raff. Oddly enough, this, the most intolerant body in the world, derives its title from William of Orange, who was the most tolerant of men. But a body of organised

fanatics such as this can often impose its views upon an unorganised body of more tolerant men. Hence the misapprehension of real Ulster which so largely prevails in England to-day. One of its most active leaders is Mr Moore, M.P. This gentleman gave a taste of Orange quality in an interesting correspondence, written in 1907, and disclosed in Parliament. He had asked a supplementary question whether it was not a fact that the delay in the Estates Commissioners' Office was due to Mr Commissioner Bailey's continued presence in London. The post of Estates Commissioner is not only *quasi-judicial*, but is one of the most responsible in Ireland. Mr Bailey then wrote a note to Mr Moore, marked private :—

“DEAR MOORE,—I see that as a supplemental question you asked the other day whether the delay in land purchase was due to the continued absence of Mr Bailey. I do not know, of course, what was your object, but it may interest you to know that for the last year I attended more days in the office than either of my colleagues, and that, as a matter of fact, I did not take much more than half the vacation to which I was entitled. You will thus see that you have been strangely misinformed, and I can only surmise that another of my colleagues was meant.—Faithfully yours,
W. F. BAILEY.”

The Orange leader replied :—

“DEAR BAILEY,—You were appointed by a Unionist Government to see fair-play between Wrench and Finucane, and you have sold the pass on every occasion. The first thing that my colleagues and I will do when we come back, which will not be very far off, will be to press for an inquiry into the working of your department. You can destroy your evidence now, and show this to whom you please.—Yours truly, W. MOORE.”

The Estates Commissioner promptly wrote :—

“Mr Bailey desires to acknowledge receipt of Mr Moore’s letter of the 19th inst., and inasmuch as it contains grave statements of a threatening and unfounded character, he will take an early opportunity of bringing the matter under notice in the proper quarter.”

Mr Moore’s letter throws a flood of light, not only upon his own limited intelligence, but upon the atmosphere of Dublin Castle. These three Estates Commissioners were to adjudicate upon the terms of purchase outside the zones, as already explained in Chapter V. The idea was to have a friend of the landlords as one of the Commissioners, and a second who would not “sell the pass.” Mr Moore probably does not realise to this day that, not only was he levelling a deadly insult at Mr Bailey, but also at his own personal friend whom he supposed to be a complaisant Commissioner. It is very pitiable, but very characteristic of the true Orangeman.

Even *The Times* described this transaction as "indefensible."

We now see that whilst the Garrison element is practically on the point of surrender, the Ulster section remains intact and retains its Protestant but Radical traditions. Under the leadership of Mr T. W. Russell, the Ulster Protestant farmers struggled for the expropriation of the landlords, and were ready to force "compulsion" to the front. Mr Balfour plainly told his party that unless the Land Purchase Bill was passed they would lose Ulster. They are a practical and thorough people, grim of aspect but tender-hearted at the core. They cannot leave their farms and flax-fields, their factories and shipbuilding yards ; whatever happens, they are now tied to the land of their birth. It is, therefore, tolerably certain that when they realise that Home Rule is inevitable they will decide to make the best of it. Then their practicality and thoroughness will be asserted, and they will demand a complete and far-reaching rather than a makeshift measure. English statesmanship can make no greater blunder than to suppose that Protestant Ulster will be placated by watering down the principle and application of Irish autonomy. They will fight it vigorously ; but their circumstances, combined with their char-

acter, will inevitably demand the best article procurable if procured it must be.

Two further observations are useful.

It must always be remembered that the problem of anti-Catholic Ulster refers only to one-half of that province. The population of Ulster, according to the census of 1901, is 1,582,826. Of this number there are 699,202 Catholics, or 44 per cent.; the Episcopalians number 360,373, or 22 per cent.; the Presbyterians 425,526, or 26 per cent.; the Methodists 47,372, or 3 per cent. Thus the Protestant population is 51 per cent. and the Catholic 44 per cent. There are nine counties in the province, and of these three (Donegal, Cavan, and Monaghan) are almost exclusively Catholic; whilst in three other counties (Tyrone, Armagh, and Fermanagh) Catholics and Protestants are about equal in number. In the counties of Down, Antrim, and Derry, and in the cities of Londonderry and Belfast, the Protestants are in a large majority. The Parliamentary representation of Ulster is 17 Unionists and 16 Home Rulers. It is clear, therefore, that to regard Ulster as a unit is to disregard the facts.

My second observation is that we must be careful to distinguish realities from statistics when we speak of prosperous Protestantism. It is true that the two chief manufacturing indus-

tries are statistically prosperous ; but the employees are far from prosperous, their wages being low and their standard of subsistence not nearly equal to textile Lancashire or to the English north-east coast, where there is so much shipbuilding. Belfast grows in population, due in no small measure to the long leases granted by the chief ground-landlord, the Marquess of Donegal ; but, for the rest, Protestant Ulster shows very much the same shrinkage of human wealth as in other parts of Ireland. From May 1851 to December 1906, no less than 28 per cent. of the total emigration from Ireland to foreign countries was from Ulster, the percentages of the other provinces being 16 per cent. from Connaught, 17 from Leinster, and 35 from Munster. Even down to 1910 the same movement persists, for in that year 12,271 emigrated from Ulster, 8330 from Munster, 7598 from Connaught, and 4258 from Leinster. The significant fact is that it is the Protestant portion of Ulster that is most affected, the highest emigration being from Antrim and Down. The Census Commissioners for Ireland in 1901 reported :—

“ The number of persons engaged in Ireland in the production and distribution of textile fabrics has fallen away very considerably in the past thirty years. . . . Looking at the principal textile manufactures, we find

that by far the most important industry in the country, viz. the flax and linen industry, has lost over 17,000, nearly one-fifth, of its workers, whilst those employed in the manufacture of woollen goods have suffered a corresponding reduction.”

Improved methods of production may possibly account for part of this diminution of Ulster's industrial population; but, after making all allowances, it seems clear that it would be a serious error to accept the prevailing version of Ulster's abounding prosperity under the Union. It certainly appears to be a part of Ireland from which its inhabitants are glad to flee in search of better conditions. It is quite possible for millionaires to blossom out of the noisome groundwork of underpaid or even sweated wages. But this does not spell “prosperity.” If we have regard to the diffusion rather than the concentration of wealth, Leinster is undoubtedly the most prosperous province of Ireland.

Throughout this chapter there have been many references to religious intolerance, but it has been shown that it comes from the Ulster Protestants, who are probably the most bigoted group in the world. Their motto is “To hell with the Pope”—and they mean it. Wherever they have the power they exclude all Papists. For example, Belfast Corporation pays annually in wages

£346,138. Of this sum only £53,728 goes to the Catholics, who are nearly one-third of the population. It would be easy to quote instance after instance proving that in public affairs the Protestant policy is "No quarter to the Catholics." It is frequently alleged in England that under Home Rule the Protestants would suffer from Catholic intolerance. If it were so, it is they who have set the example. What is feared, really, is the downfall of Protestant ascendancy. Sometimes this is openly avowed. Thus the Rev. Henry Henderson of Holywood, speaking recently at an Orange demonstration, put it bluntly :—

"It was right they should tell their English brethren the truth. It was right they should tell them that so long as there was Protestantism in the land, and a Protestant sovereign occupying the throne, *so long must there be a Protestant ascendancy.*"

This humble follower of "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild" evidently believes that the Sermon on the Mount does not apply to Roman Catholics.

But is there any evidence of Catholic intolerance in Ireland? In 26 counties out of 32 they are in a huge majority, holding the scattered Protestants in the hollow of their hand. Yet of Catholic intolerance in Catholic counties and towns there is barely a trace. There is a cloud of Protestant witnesses who affirm that they

receive the most neighbourly courtesy and consideration from the Catholic majority. Throughout the south of Ireland are to be found Protestant traders who absolutely rely upon their neighbours for their livelihood. They prosper exceedingly. This is not because of their religion ; nor is it in despite of it ; it is because they are men of probity and character, of whom the Irish are shrewd judges. They do not slacken in their faith : if they did, their Catholic neighbours would soon distrust them. But, subject to such limitations as they politically impose upon themselves, if they take their share in the social duties and amenities of their district they are welcomed with open arms : their Protestantism becomes a positive advantage. If, being Protestants, they sympathise with the national aspirations of their country, I know of no more charming life to be lived in any part of the world. Indeed, this very Catholic tolerance struck Mr Alfred Webb, a well-known Quaker, as almost a drag upon Irish progress :—

“ Ireland’s great fault is forgetfulness of past wrongs and too great easiness of temper towards those who stand between her and her rights. If the majority in Ireland knew as well how to boycott as do the minority, they would long ago have obtained all they ask. How can it be feared that a Catholic majority would persecute

the Protestant minority in Ireland, when Catholic minorities are anxious to live undisturbed amid Protestant majorities in other parts of the world ? ”

Mr Ernest Grubb is another prominent Quaker. He is a trader, as was his father before him. He lives in Carrick-on-Suir, and his connections are to be found throughout the counties of Tipperary and Waterford—a densely Catholic district. Yet he is Chairman of the County Council of Tipperary South and the Urban Council of Carrick-on-Suir. In a letter to *The Spectator* he says :—

“ Ninety to ninety-eight per cent. of my constituents are Roman Catholics, and if ‘ religious intolerance ’ existed, I would not have been chosen for these positions.”

He then cites a number of cases where Protestant Unionists have been co-opted or appointed to positions by Roman Catholics. The fruit of his experience of a long life is thus summed up :—

“ I have personally no fear that, whatever legislative changes may take place in the arrangements for the government of Ireland, there will be anything to prevent Roman Catholics and Protestants from living harmoniously together in the land of their birth.”

Personally, I doubt if intolerance ever occurs without the stimulus of the priest, be he Catholic,

Anglican, or Nonconformist. There is generally some Protestant priest in Ulster wickedly egging on his flock. The discipline of the Catholic hierarchy would be available to prevent any Catholic priest playing such monkey-tricks as do their Protestant confrères, even if they were so disposed. But, as Irish education and self-government develop, it is evident that the Catholic priest is gradually retiring into his own spiritual sphere, where probably in other ways he will do more damage. When the Irish Local Government Act was passed it was freely prophesied that it would lead to the aggrandisement of the priest. The exact reverse has happened : the lay element has asserted itself ; the priest is not in evidence. There are signs that the Catholic priesthood welcome the change. Thus the Very Rev. Dr Beecher, of Maynooth, in December 1910 said :—

“ We often hear it said that it will be the end of the influence of the priest, that it will mark the alienation of priests and people. That it will mean in large part the end of the priests’ political influence, personally I have no doubt. And if I know the Irish priests aright, I should say that none will be more willing than they to forgo, save as citizens, much of the influence which they wielded in the past.”

The truth is that an active participation in

politics is not so conducive to priestly influence as is commonly imagined. In local affairs opinions are often, indeed generally, sharply divided. It is very difficult for a priest to steer his way with an even keel through local troubled waters. He is better out of it.

Apart, however, from such temporal considerations, the Irish priests are probably more deeply imbued with their spiritual mission than those of any other nationality. They have for so long been completely divorced from the official classes that political temporising with them has become almost a lost art. Morally, their lives bear close examination, whilst the tragedy of Ireland has been to them a horrible reality, only known as intimately by the village doctor.

All organised religions are a menace and an obstacle to the march of free ideas : and this is as true of Ireland as of any other country. The mistake made by the English people is that they have complacently assumed their own freedom from priestcraft and Irish subjection to it. Yet the "squire and parson" in England, the laird and minister in Scotland, the employer and pastor in Wales, have shown themselves greater adepts at social, economic, and spiritual oppression than the priests and traders in Ireland. The Irish people are pious Catholics and will remain so ;

but they will preserve their political freedom at all costs. They have taught Rome more than one lesson in their time—notably over the Errington mission and the Parnell tribute. They will act on the words of one of their own leaders : “ I am willing,” said he, “ to take my religion from the Pope of Rome, but not my politics from an Italian priest.”

IX

THE NATIONALIST ELEMENTS

WE have seen that the Unionists of Ireland are not homogeneous ; that they are split into diverse elements whose interests—particularly on the economic plane—are even antagonistic. The National party of Ireland is equally split into heterogeneous parts—a factor in the situation full of hope and promise. It is a common criticism that the Irish people are sadly addicted to factions. Why not ? Where there are no factions, there is death. This criticism comes from England, of all countries in the world. England's political life is kept as clean as is reasonably possible by its factions. Sleepy and inert acquiescence in large parties is a fruitful source of decadence and corruption. The party manager in Great Britain and the "boss" in America ply their baneful trade with impudent assurance when they can rely upon unbroken party cohesion. New ideas inevitably invite

new organisations, and in due time either create a new party or transform an old one. The British Statute Book is, after all, the final synopsis of the fructification of ideas once rejected by the party managers as new and crude. Is a quick-witted race like the Irish to be denied the right of intellectual struggle? Is it to be for ever condemned to a mechanical orthodoxy and unanimity? You cannot indict a nation. True; but neither can any one man voice the multitudinous thoughts and needs of a nation. Orthodoxy, either in politics or religion, is the parent of servitude—the true and only begetter of slave morality.

It is certain that Ireland will not submit to any such degradation. In the future, as in the past, the factions or the parties may not act with unerring wisdom; that is an attribute that was denied even to the gods on Olympus. But the very existence of these contending parties spells vitality and virtue. This vital quality has always, fortunately, been a marked feature of Nationalist Ireland. Thus Parnell and Davitt fought together in the Land League and the Irish National League, although no two men could be intellectually and temperamentally wider apart. Parnell was an aristocrat; Davitt a democrat: the one profoundly believed in a

conception of social order from which the other profoundly dissented. Davitt once asked Parnell what would be the first thing he would do when an Irish Parliament was set up. "Put you in gaol," came the grim response. Yet, had Parnell lived to do this thing, he might conceivably have found himself faced with a general strike. It is inevitable that there will be a completely new alignment of parties when Irishmen meet in an Irish Parliament. Just as the Castle and the Colony are bound together by a fanatical Protestantism, so, amongst the others, aristocrat, bourgeois, and democrat are held together by nationalism. The continuance of these bonds is contingent upon the continuance of the Act of Union. Once grant Home Rule and we shall speedily see the Protestant and Catholic bourgeoisie amalgamating against Catholic and Protestant democrats; who in their turn will amalgamate for industrial protection and aggression. And herein will be found the safest guarantee against what the politicians call "separatism." For the Irish and English middle classes will mutually aid and succour each other, whilst the Irish and British industrialists will be comrades and coadjutors with their fellows in Great Britain. If they do not realise it already, the Irish proletariat will speedily discover that autonomy

is no protection against economic exploitation. In like manner, the Irish employer must not reckon upon the same industrial docility as has been exhibited by Catholic and Protestant when they were preoccupied, to the point of moral and economic exhaustion, with the purely political issue of Irish nationality.

The history of Irish nationalism is in large part made up of grave contentions between the supporters of a system of capitalistic property and revolutionists who were as acutely alive to economic as to national oppression. These revolutionists were not merely in intellectual but in personal touch with the rebels of other countries. The French Revolution left a deep mark in Ireland. The "Volunteers," in public assembly in Belfast on July 14, 1791, declared :—

"Neither on marble nor brass can the rights and duties of men be so durably registered as on their memories and on their hearts. We therefore meet this day to commemorate the French Revolution, that the remembrance of this great event may sink deeply into our hearts, warmed not merely with the fellow-feeling of townsmen, but with a sympathy that binds us to the human race in a brotherhood of interest, of duty and affection. . . . We do really rejoice in this resurrection of human nature, and we congratulate our brother man coming forth from the vaults of ingenious torture and from the cave of death. We do congratulate the

Christian world that there is in it one great nation which has renounced all ideas of conquest, and has published the first glorious manifesto of humanity, of union, and of peace."

And much more to the same effect. Remember that these men were the Protestant ancestors of the present Belfast democracy. This manifesto led to the formation of the "United Irishmen." In October of that year Wolfe Tone went to Belfast to meet a group of Volunteers. He travelled at once to Dublin to secure its co-operation. The influence of the French Revolution was clear and powerful. Even in those days Irishmen were not insulated; they would fain have become internationalists. They vaguely realised that they must first become truly national.

The Emmet conspiracy was the direct result of the movement of the United Irishmen. It was almost exclusively proletarian in its organisation. On the night of the insurrection Daniel O'Connell, who was a member of the Lawyers' Yeomanry Corps, turned out on duty to help in its suppression—a significant fact, as after-events proved. Emmet, before his capture, had drawn up a proclamation to be issued by the "Provisional Government of Ireland." It is interesting to note that the first article of this

declaration decreed the wholesale confiscation of Church property, with its subsequent nationalisation. The second and third decrees forbade and declared void the transfers of all landed property, bonds, debentures, and public securities until the national government was established and the national will upon them declared. Again we see obvious traces of the French Revolution. Emmet was explicit that to him a new régime meant more than a mere change in the form of government. When examined before the Secret Committee of the House of Lords at the Fort George prison, he frankly declared that if successful he would have inaugurated a very different social system from that prevailing. It is not surprising that Daniel O'Connell and his bourgeois supporters should resolutely oppose such subversive proposals. Yet both Emmet and O'Connell were nationalists.

Twenty years later O'Connell became the leader of the Repeal Movement. It is high time that this leather-lunged Boanerges ceased to be a national hero in Ireland. He possessed distinct political capacity, could indite a document with considerable skill and power, was keen in debate and brilliant in repartee. But his intellectual equipment was negligible, and, short of fidelity to the idea of nationality, he was *par excellence*

a squireen with social pretensions. He thoroughly enjoyed posturing on the stage of the British Parliament, and, repeal or no repeal, he had no intention to leave it. In starting the Repeal movement he had need of working-class support, and accordingly courted with oily phrases the artisans and labourers. But he mainly relied upon the Catholic clergy and middle classes. However much he disliked it, he had to incorporate the trade unions in his association, but not without protest from his "respectable" supporters. Thus the *Irish Monthly Magazine* in its September 1832 issue sees danger in this unwelcome combination to the National Union of Repealers: "There is a contemporary union composed of the tradesmen and operative classes, the members of which are qualified to vote at its sittings, and who are in every respect put upon a perfect equality with the members of the National Union." In the December issue it returns to the charge: "In fact, we apprehend great mischief and little good from the trade union as at present constituted." As O'Connell's influence grew amongst the middle and professional classes, his trade-union fervour abated. Three years after formally allying himself with the Whigs (whose intellectual distinction he lacked and envied), Mr Wakley, M.P. for Fins-

bury, moved for a "Select Committee to inquire into the constitution, practices, and effects of the Association of Cotton Operatives of Glasgow." O'Connell opposed the motion, and in doing so attacked the Irish trade unions :—

"There was no tyranny equal to that which was exercised by the trade unionists in Dublin over their fellow-labourers. One rule of the workmen prescribed a minimum rate of wages, so that the best workmen received no more than the worst. Another part of their system was directed towards depriving the masters of all freedom in their power of selecting workmen. The names of the workmen being inscribed in a book, the employer was compelled to take the first on the list."

In this same speech he ascribed the loss of much of Dublin's trade to the trade unions, although he had previously gained their support by assuring them that the loss was due to the Act of Union. It is typical of his intellectual incapacity to see realities ; for he was wrong in either alternative. In any event, it is obvious that, beyond the bond of nationality and religion, there was nothing in common between the landlord O'Connell and the Irish artisans. Feargus O'Connor, one of O'Connell's ablest lieutenants, differed from his chief on this question of the claims of labour. He found O'Connell's class-feeling too strong to contend against, and, leaving

O'Connell to stew in his own capitalistic juice, threw himself into the Chartist movement in England—another Irish veteran who gave to England what was meant for Ireland.

A few years later came the Great Famine, and out of it grew a train of new events, movements, and currents. Again we can trace the same class cleavage in the ranks of national Ireland. This later phase is best known in history as the "Young Ireland" movement. Again we may note the international influence at work. It came, through Mazzini, from Young Italy, Young France, and Young Germany. We may observe in it, also, the same Socialistic (as distinct from Socialist) ferment; clear, too, is the same intense nationalism as a stepping-stone to internationalism. New names now come to view. First and foremost John Mitchel, probably the greatest Irishman of his century, and with him Fintan Lalor, Gavan Duffy, T. F. Meagher (afterwards famous as the Federal general in the American War), Devin Reilly, William Smith O'Brien, and Thomas Davis.

Into the souls of these men had entered the iron of the Famine. They saw not only the long-drawn-out agony of that gigantic tragedy, but they saw also its predisposing causes. The first failure of the potato crop came in 1845. In that

year 515 died from starvation; but 3,250,000 quarters of wheat and a multitude of cattle were exported. For five long years the horror continued: so also did the exports. The cruelest year was 1848, when 300,000 died of hunger, and 1,826,132 quarters of wheat and barley, grown by Irish peasants, were consumed in foreign lands. These young Irishmen were under no delusions: Irishmen were undoubtedly starving their fellow-countrymen in the interests of landlords and capitalists. John Mitchel, Fintan Lalor, and Devin Reilly advocated the non-payment of rents and retention of all crops in Ireland. They were prepared to go to any lengths to achieve this purpose. Alas! the love of the rights of property above the rights of the people to live prevailed, and whilst the Young Irelanders talked, the people died like flies.

“Of all the words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are, ‘What might have been!’”

The people were ripe and over-ripe for rebellion. It was not to be: their leaders, accepting the principles of the existing social order, believed in law and order and funkcd the necessities of the situation. Alone amongst them, John Mitchel declined to recognise such an abortion of justice; but the British Government had whisked him off

to Tasmania. When the news reached Dublin that the "Young Ireland" leaders were to be arrested, the artisans of Dublin and the peasantry spontaneously proposed to effect their rescue. This was not at all to the minds of these leaders. The last thing they wanted was a proletarian insurrection. No rabble for them! Doheny was actually rescued from Cashel prison. He gave himself up again and applied for bail. In Waterford, Meagher was arrested. The people erected a barricade across the bridge. When it was reached by the troops surrounding his carriage, the people cut the horses' traces. Meagher ordered them to remove the barricade; they urged him to give the word for an insurrection. Waterford was actually in their hands. Meagher persisted and went on with the troops, the Waterford rebels shouting after him, "You will regret it, you will regret it, and it is your own fault." This by no means meant cowardice on Meagher's part. He subsequently proved himself a fearless soldier. It was bourgeois romanticism shrivelling up before reality.

But the extravaganza reached its climax with William Smith O'Brien. This man owned immense estates; the rights of property penetrated his whole personality. He warned the peasantry to get ready; they were starving and they could

only "get ready" by eating food ; but he would not let them feed themselves at the expense of the landlords, who were their *fons et origo mali*. The people were dying of hunger, but they must not seize the carts of grain that passed them on the roads. At Mullinahone, he refused to let them fell trees to build a barricade until they had asked the landlord's permission. The people of Killenaule entrapped a body of dragoons. He released them upon their leader assuring him that he had no warrant for O'Brien's arrest. Then he surprised a party of soldiers with their arms taken apart to clean. Instead of confiscating them, he told the soldiers that their arms were as safe there as in Dublin Castle. Well might an Irish writer say :—

"The man had broken up a peaceful organisation in the cause of war, promised war to a people in desperate strait, then considered it guilt to do any act of war."

After all, says Mr Connolly, "it is more wonderful that he had dreamed of rebellion than that he had repudiated revolution." And it was just revolution that the Young Ireland chiefs could not accept. Doheny said so frankly. "It was revolution if we had accepted it." These young men dreamt of a new nation resplendent in all the glory of the old ideas. They were faithful

nationalists : the proletarian upheaval did not appeal to them.

Precisely the same concatenation of events meets us with the Fenian movement. A revolutionary proletariat, devotedly nationalist, dreaming of a new nation clothed in appropriately new conceptions of life, but ultimately defeated by a middle class, also devotedly nationalist, but, guided by the Catholic Church, unsympathetic to those industrial ambitions which must ever be the fibre and substance of a new life. We have again the same intellectual response to the European movement as in 1792 and 1848. Branches of the International Working Men's Association were founded in Dublin and Cork in 1867, and they continued until after the French Commune.

The Fenian Brotherhood was established by John O'Mahony and James Stephens in 1857, but did not develop quickly. We have seen (see Chapter IV.) how that it was the pressure of the Fenian movement that compelled Gladstone to give the Land Act of 1870. It was a secret society, anti-clerical in spirit and revolutionary in action. Both O'Mahony and Stephens were not only sympathisers but actual members of secret societies in France. Indeed, *The Irishman* of October 31, 1868, declares that the Fenian Brotherhood

“took its rise in the Latin Quarter of this city [its Paris correspondent is writing] when John O’Mahony, Michael Doheny, and James Stephens were here in exile after 1848. This was the triumvirate from whose plotting brains the idea of Fenianism sprung. O’Mahony, deep in lore of Ireland and loving her traditions, found its name for the new society. Doheny, with his dogged, acute, and vigorous character, stamped it with much of the force that helped it into life, but to Stephens is due the direction it took in line of sympathy with the movements of the Revolution on the Continent. He saw that the Irish question was no longer a question of religion ; his common sense was too large to permit him to consider it a question of race even ; he felt it was the old struggle which agitated France at the end of last century transferred to new ground ; the opposing forces were the same, with this difference, that in Ireland the people had not the consolation in all cases of saluting their tyrants as their countrymen.”

So thoroughly was Stephens imbued with French ideas that he chose General Cluseret, afterwards Commander-in-Chief of the Federals during the Commune of Paris, to be Commander-in-Chief of the Irish Republican Army.

The Fenian Brotherhood included in its ranks many Protestants, it rigidly excluded all priests, it aimed at armed rebellion. Richard Pigott (who afterwards sold himself to *The Times*) says in his *Recollections of an Irish Journalist* :—

“ It is notorious that Fenianism was regarded with unconcealed aversion, not to say deadly hatred, not merely by the landlords and the ruling class, but by the Catholic clergy, the middle-class Catholics, and the great majority of the farming classes. It was, in fact, only amongst the youngest and most intelligent of the labouring class, of the young men of the large towns and cities engaged in the humbler walks of mercantile life, of the artisans and working classes, that it found favour.”

This is true ; and it would be equally true to add that the Fenian movement exercised a most salutary effect upon the spiritual and intellectual life of Ireland. It put heart into the downcast, it braced up the down-trodden, it taught Irishmen self-respect, it made them proud of their country and unafraid of their destiny. To this day the Fenian influence can be felt in Ireland, whilst it still dominates the American Irish. Superficially regarded, it failed ; in the deeper sense, it saved Ireland. The Home Rule movement of to-day might still be steeped in Whiggery had there been no Fenianism. It is often asserted that the Fenians resorted to midnight outrages, to cattle-houghing, and to assassination. Doubtless there were individual Fenians who did these things, but anything savouring of the surreptitious, of the sneak or murderer, was utterly foreign to Fenian-

ism. It secretly and patiently organised an army of revolt ; it tried its luck in 1867 ; the rising failed ; the movement gradually disbanded.

A decade later came the Gladstonian régime of concessions with coercion, the Land League, the formation of the Irish Parliamentary party on more democratic lines following the franchise of 1885.

No account of the factors which go to make up modern Ireland would be adequate unless some account were included of the proletarian movement. We can now see that for a century and more there has been a definite industrial movement, distinctively Irish, but often touching the Protestant industrialists, only to be sundered by religious bigotry. Can it now be doubted that if a Parliament be granted to Ireland, Protestant and Catholic workmen will find their economic interests identical, and will co-operate accordingly ? Differences of religion will sink into their proper perspective, and Ireland may yet be the scene of extraordinary experiments in co-operative wealth production.

It becomes evident, too, that the development of economic and social ideas will necessarily bring Ireland closer to England, to Europe, and the world. Inspired with an unimpaired sense of nationality, both capital and labour will

inevitably link up to their natural allies wherever they are to be found. Nor need we doubt that, however conservative may be the disposition of the Irishman in religion and habit, the new dispensation will stimulate his initiative faculties to the enrichment, not only of Ireland, but of the British Empire and the world.

X

FEDERAL HOME RULE

WE have now made a survey of the factors that go to make up modern Ireland. We have found that for historical reasons, and without imputing blame, Irish industries in the past have been unjustly handicapped, and that they still suffer. We have discovered that, although the Irish agriculturist has made headway under recent legislation, much still remains to be done. If land purchase be the right policy, as it is undoubtedly the accepted policy, then there must be a speeding-up in the work of the Land Commission. After nine years of the Wyndham Act we find that although 223,733 tenants have lodged agreements, only 84,349 have obtained satisfaction. If a similar delay in the English Courts occurred there would immediately be an angry outcry. Further, we find that only the fringe of the western problem has as yet been touched, whilst there cannot be the least doubt

that it is as grave as it is urgent. Nor does there appear the slightest prospect that this tragic and human conundrum is at all likely to be seriously approached by the British Parliament. We have seen that the Congested Districts Board, good work though it undoubtedly performs, is hopelessly inadequate to cope with a problem which cannot be solved under existing political conditions. We see to our dismay that the agricultural labourer is being branded for ever as a landless outlander in the land of his birth. We are confronted with administrative waste which admittedly burdens Ireland to the tune of possibly £4,000,000 a year. We are shocked at the unnecessary waste in the Irish railway system and the negative waste involved in the *non possumus* attitude of the British Government in regard to drainage, fisheries, canals, harbours, housing, and afforestation. We cannot but be shocked at the anarchistic and archaic system of education and the hopeless fatuity of the English Poor Law system in Ireland. More psychological but not less real is the spiritual and material depression induced by the permanent malaise of maimed nationality. The cry of this people, slowly bleeding to death, goes up to the relentless gods, and no answer comes back from the sunless heavens. Famine and pestilence have pursued

them with the sure fatefulness of a Greek tragedy. Exile, prison, and the hangman's rope have been the Irish patriot's guerdon, or—perchance, more lamentable—their statesmanship has brought back Dead Sea fruit. Assuredly God does not comfort the Irish.

It will not be gainsaid that the responsibility is England's. Ireland has made her position clear beyond all cavil. She points to her pitiable posture : “ You cannot cure this ; let me.”

If there were no urgent British legislation, no political problem, no deep-rooted poverty, if the British body-politic were healthy, requiring no treatment, even then it would take a decade of the British Parliament's time to catch up the arrears of work in Ireland. We know, however, that British proposal after proposal, project after project, presses for solution ; that annually the question of finance grows more complicated and difficult ; that military and naval policy more and more absorbs time and consideration ; that foreign and colonial relationships increasingly demand time for discussion : in such circumstances how can Parliament attend to the special needs of Ireland ? Nor could England, even with the time and disposition, effectively legislate with any expectation of fruitful results. The ills calling for treatment are local, special, and

unique. They demand expert and local knowledge. In every department of administrative action English control has been proved ineffective and worse than useless—in fact, positively detrimental. I have already dealt with the Poor Law system and proved this. Has it occurred to England that Irish education is suffering, not from Irish but from English prejudices? The whole economy of Ireland is as distinct from England's as is French or German economy. Indeed, the industrial systems of America and Germany bring those countries nearer to England than is Ireland. Mr Bernard Shaw, in *John Bull's Other Island*, makes his Irish engineer say that it is his business to bring Galway close to Colchester. But Colchester is in reality nearer to Holland and Germany and America than it is ever likely to be to Dublin or Galway. What then is the way out?

From 1823 when O'Connell founded the Catholic Association, from 1829 when he first spoke for a party in Parliament, from 1848 when the Tenants' League was formed, from 1870 when the Home Government Association was established, from 1879 when the Irish Land League and the National League were established, from 1898 when the United Irish League rose out of their ashes,—in all these changes, and through

the vicissitudes of famine and insurrection, Ireland has been extraordinarily consistent in its demand for autonomy.

O'Connell called for the repeal of the Union. But a moment's thought should have taught him that mere repeal was no remedy, because under the Irish Parliament the Executive was independent and worked in conjunction with and under the instructions of the British Government. Mr Sharman Crawford in 1832 first definitely formulated Ireland's demand. Oddly enough, it was a proposal for federal home rule. In 1844, after O'Connell's release from prison, it was announced that the federal solution was acceptable to the Whig party. In October 1844, O'Connell wrote a letter to the Repeal Association, which, in the light of the modern federal movement, is extremely significant. He wrote :—

“ Both parties are agreed that those powers should be sufficiently extensive to enable the Irish Parliament to protect the lives, liberties, and property of the people. That it should have the power to enact all the laws to be in force in Ireland—in short, that it should be an efficient Parliament for all legislative, financial, and judicial purposes within Her Majesty's realm of Ireland. The simple Repealers are of opinion that the reconstituted Irish Parliament should have the same power and authority which the former Irish Parliament had. The ‘Federalists,’ on the contrary, appear to

me to require more for Ireland than the simple Repealers do ; for besides the local Parliament in Ireland having full and perfect local authority, the Federalists require that there should be, for questions of Imperial concern, colonial, military, and naval, and of foreign alliance and policy, a Congressional or Federal Parliament, in which Ireland should have a fair share and proportion of representation and power.

“ It is but right and just to confess that in this respect the Federalist would give Ireland more weight and importance in Imperial concerns than she would receive by the plan of the simple Repealers. . . . For my own part, I will own, since I have come to contemplate the specific differences, such as they are, between ‘ simple Repeal ’ and Federalism, I do at present feel a preference for the Federative plan, as tending more to the utility of Ireland.”

After the defeat of the Fenian rising, Ireland again returned to a constitutional agitation. A large and representative conference was held at the Rotunda, Dublin, on November 18, 19, 20, and 21, 1873. Then, for the first time, the basis of Home Rule was definitely and authoritatively formulated. The following resolutions were, after careful discussion, unanimously adopted :—

“ I. That, as the basis of the proceedings of this Conference, we declare our conviction that it is essentially necessary to the peace and prosperity of Ireland

that the right of domestic legislation on all Irish affairs should be restored to our country.

“ II. That, solemnly reasserting the inalienable right of the Irish people to self-government, we declare the time in our opinion has come when a combined and energetic effort should be made to obtain the restoration of that right.

“ III. That, in accordance with the ancient and constitutional rights of the Irish nation, we claim the privilege of managing our own affairs by a Parliament assembled in Ireland, and composed of the Sovereign, the Lords, and the Commons of Ireland.

“ IV. That, in claiming these rights and privileges for our country, we adopt the principle of a Federal arrangement, which would secure to the Irish Parliament the right of legislating for and regulating all matters relating to the internal affairs of Ireland, while leaving to the Imperial Parliament the power of dealing with all questions affecting the Imperial Crown and Government, legislation regarding the colonies and other dependencies of the Crown, the relations of the Empire with foreign States, and all matters appertaining to the defence and stability of the Empire at large ; as well as the power of granting and providing the supplies necessary for Imperial purposes.

“ V. That such an arrangement does not involve any change in the existing constitution of the Imperial Parliament, or any interference with the prerogatives of the Crown or disturbance of the principles of the Constitution.

“ VI. That, to secure to the Irish people the advantages of constitutional government, it is essential that

there should be in Ireland an administration for Irish affairs, controlled, according to constitutional principles, by the Irish Parliament, and conducted by ministers constitutionally responsible to that Parliament.

“ VII. That, in the opinion of this Conference, a Federal arrangement, based upon these principles, would consolidate the strength and maintain the integrity of the Empire, and add to the dignity and power of the Imperial Crown.

“ VIII. That, while we believe that in an Irish Parliament the rights and liberties of all classes of our countrymen would find their best and surest protection, we are willing that there should be incorporated in the Federal Constitution articles supplying the amplest guarantees that no change shall be made by that Parliament in the present settlement of property in Ireland, and that no legislation shall be adopted to establish any religious ascendancy in Ireland, or to subject any person to disabilities on account of his religious opinions.”

Here, then, we find a full acceptance of the federal principle. It is too readily assumed by English politicians that federation is fatal to the idea of Home Rule. If it be so, it did not occur to Sharman Crawford or O’Connell or Butt or Parnell or Redmond. Parnell was deeply committed to federalism. His interview with Cecil Rhodes leaves no doubt about it, even if his subsequent letter did not clinch the matter.

The interview and the letter are to be found in Mr Barry O'Brien's *Life of Parnell*, and are too lengthy for reproduction here. But a phrase or two will make the point clear. Rhodes tells Parnell that he wants the retention of the Irish members because he wants Imperial Federation, and he thinks exclusion would tend to postpone it. Parnell replies that he does not feel strongly on the question of retention, but that Gladstone is strongly opposed to it. Get Gladstone to agree, and so would he. Then Rhodes says that he wants a permissive clause in the Home Rule Bill, "providing that any colony which contributes to Imperial defence—to the Imperial army or navy—shall be allowed to send representatives to the Imperial Parliament in proportion to its contributions to the Imperial revenue. Then I think the number of Irish representatives should be cut down in proportion to Ireland's contribution to the Imperial revenue, so as to keep Ireland in line with the Colonies." Parnell replies that he has no objection to this permissive clause. As we shall see in the next chapter, Gladstone changed his mind. In the 1885 bill he excluded the Irish members; in 1893 he retained them.

Both Parnell and Rhodes agreed that the retention of the Irish members made for Im-

perial Federation. I cannot but think that they took short views.

Let us try to visualise federation. In the first place, it involves not merely local autonomy but contented autonomy. Each autonomous part of the federation must be free from any kind of irritating interference in its local concerns. It must be complete master in its own home—master of the police, of education, of its internal economy, above all, of finance. In Chapter II. we have seen that the modern empire can only exist on the basis of free consent of its integral parts : we have further discovered (although a truism) that free consent is contingent upon complete local autonomy. Now, it is universally recognised that Ireland stands in the way of any federal solution. Until complete Irish autonomy is granted, federalism remains a very shadowy concept. It is, therefore, of the first importance from the federal standpoint that the Irish settlement should be complete and permanent. But how can any settlement of an enduring character be reached if the Irish Parliament is not to control (a) the levying of all taxation in Ireland, and (b) the spending of all necessary moneys in Ireland ? That is to say, apart from Ireland's Imperial contribution (on a basis to be hereafter agreed upon by the high contracting parties),

the Irish Parliament must control absolutely its own finance. (There is an unhappy tendency on the part of the Irish Parliamentary party to underestimate the importance of controlling Irish finance. It is not that they do not desire it, but they think it will frighten the English electorate. Mention the word "customs," and no doubt a number of English free traders will instantly conjure up visions of an Irish protective tariff operating adversely upon British trade with Ireland. But this bogey can be easily exorcised by a clause in any Home Rule Bill specifically providing for uniformity of fiscal policy so long as Great Britain continues her free-trade policy.)

Now, if the retention of the Irish members be insisted upon, it is evident that the principle of taxation with representation becomes operative. The British Parliament may say that for political reasons retention is imperative; therefore, as the Irish members must still come to Westminster and sit and vote upon British legislation and finance, there is no reason why Irish finance should be differentiated from British, and accordingly the British tax-collector would remain in Ireland. If Irish control of its own finance be conceded, then the Irish members have no *locus standi* at Westminster. For they ought

not, either by speech or vote, to influence exclusively British legislation, and (beyond the votes for the Foreign Office and the Army and Navy) they ought not to affect British financial policy. This dilemma is sometimes met by what is known as the "in and out" proposal. That is to say, that the Irish members should kick their heels in Parliamentary purlieus nine days out of ten, and then sit on certain sections of the Finance Bill, and so disappear again. But finance cannot be divorced from policy—home policy and foreign policy. Irish members would be acting *ultra vires* by voting on purely British domestic affairs, involving home policy, whilst they would be within their rights to discuss foreign affairs. But who could possibly foresee, in the kaleidoscopic life of Parliament, when a home issue would suddenly give way to a discussion on foreign affairs? The "in and out" proposal is utterly impracticable.

Remains then the problem of Imperial policy and finance. In logic it cannot be denied that so long as Ireland is compelled to contribute her quota to the Imperial exchequer she has a right to a voice in the discussion upon and the finance of Imperial policy. But so also have the Colonies, who submit to British naval and military control. It is true that whatever they

contribute is voluntary, whilst Ireland's contribution is compulsory. Admittedly it is an *impasse*. But Imperial Federation is proposed to escape from it. Suppose that the Irish members are retained, sitting and voting as ordinary British members, how can that possibly expedite the escape? It merely means the prolongation of the present anomalous situation. For the British people will complacently believe that the Irish solution solves federation, and will decline to pursue the question. Further, it would be not only impracticable but unjust to Great Britain to have her home affairs made the plaything of Colonial members of Parliament, who sit merely on the strength of a certain contribution to the Imperial Exchequer. But, *per contra*, it is equally certain that no British Colony would agree to any scheme of Imperial Federation that involves such a control over their own finances as is predicated by the retention of the Irish members, with its consequent control over Irish finances. Mr Rhodes seemed to think that the presence of Irish members in Westminster, after Home Rule had been granted, would act as an entering wedge for Imperial Federation. But he would have been the first to repudiate any suggestion that the Colonies should send representatives on the same terms. It therefore

follows that if the Irish members were retained, and Imperial Federation subsequently became a living issue, Irish finance would again be thrown into the melting-pot, and consequently the forthcoming Home Rule Bill would not be a permanent solution of the Irish problem. Finance is the key to all social legislation in these later days; and as social legislation by an Irish Parliament is the crying need of Ireland, it follows that unless the Irish Parliament can control, unhampered, its finance, Home Rule would prove not only illusory but positively dangerous and menacing to British and Imperial policy. Thus the conclusion seems to be (a) that the retention of Irish members would not be a model or a precedent for representative federation, owing to the difficulty of financial control, and (b) such retention would hamper Irish development, not only because of financial restrictions, but also because Ireland wants her best men in Dublin and cannot spare them.

Before Imperial Federation becomes a reality, it will be necessary for an Imperial Committee to agree definitely upon what constitutes Imperial finance. This means that Great Britain, Ireland, and the self-governing Colonies must arrive at some general conclusion as to the actual cost of maintaining the Empire as distinct from purely

British and Colonial expenditure. They must then agree what their respective contributions ought to be. We may rest assured that an Imperial fund such as this would never be realised unless with representative Imperial control. It is also clear that all such contributions would never be levied on the taxpayers, but would be paid through the several exchequers of each subordinate Government. Thus the Imperial control of Imperial finance would assume an entirely new phase, and Imperial policy would inevitably be modified. We may doubt whether any such development as this would be agreeable to the official hierarchies in Downing Street, the Admiralty, and the Horse Guards. Hitherto they have preferred to let Great Britain and Ireland pay for the upkeep of the Empire, so that they might retain absolute control over foreign policy and the unrestricted command of the Army and the Navy. There are indications that Canada and Australia are growing restive. At the last Colonial Premiers' Conference, Sir Edward Grey deemed it politic to admit them into the secrets (or some of them) of the Foreign Office. World-politics is not now a force with which Great Britain can alone contend ; she must soon call to her aid the moral and material support of her children. But they

are now grown up, and demand a real and not a nominal partnership. In this great movement a contented and self-respecting Ireland can play a reconciling and useful part ; a discontented Ireland of arrested growth can easily choke the Imperial machinery with the barren sand of anger and hatred.

It will be for Scotland and Wales to define their own positions under any federal scheme that may be devised. Scottish Home Rule is something more than a pious aspiration, and has considerable force behind it. But it has not yet reached the constructive stage, and is palpably neither so urgently called for nor so passionately prayed for as is Home Rule for Ireland. Fifteen years ago there was a politically nationalist movement in Wales, which has since been largely merged into Liberalism. Yet the Welsh nationalist sentiment is vigorous, but at present finds easiest expression in æsthetic forms. The Welsh language is a powerful instrument for the development of Welsh thoughts and aspirations. We can see many difficulties, both political and economic ; but it is for some completely representative Welsh council to formulate Welsh demands. Until then, outside criticism is impertinent, in the true sense of the word.

Meantime, the Irish settlement grows more

and more urgent. Not less so because those most deeply affected are the least articulate sections of the Irish people. Ireland cannot wait. And if she did, Imperial Federation would not be helped forward ; it would be hindered and delayed, at a cost to Ireland not to be measured or calculated.



XI

GLADSTONIAN HOME RULE

IN 1885, Gladstone finally crystallised his wavering mind by tabling his Home Rule Bill. He and his faithful followers had "found salvation." The introduction of this measure, cautious and halting though it was in many important aspects, marked a turning-point in the relations between England and Ireland. For the hearts of the majority of Irishmen at long last turned towards the English people, a feeling of amity supplanting a devouring hatred born of bitter wrongs and thwarted hopes. It was Parnell's triumph—not so much as a Parliamentarian acting in Parliament, as that he could go back to Ireland and confound the physical-force party with the apparently true claim that he had accomplished by constitutional methods what they had failed to do by violence, threats of violence or intimidation. It is a claim which the impartial historian will only concede after making many important

reservations. Nevertheless, Gladstone's conversion began a new Irish epoch : Home Rule, in the essential sense that it recognises Irish nationality, had been accepted by one of the orthodox parties of Great Britain. The 1885 measure was rejected, and Gladstone went into the wilderness for seven years. With victory well within sight, came the O'Shea divorce suit, followed by the defection of a majority of Parnell's followers and the split in the Nationalist party. This led to Parnell's death in 1891.

Thus the fate that seems always to beset Ireland again played a trump card. Ireland's one constructive statesman was "cut off ere his prime" at the supreme moment that Ireland had need of him. In losing Parnell, Ireland lost the greatest of all her leaders. It is a current belief that O'Connell and he stand out together with equal claims to immortality. In my opinion, only John Mitchel amongst Irishmen can compare with Parnell as a political leader, whilst as an intellectual Mitchel was vastly Parnell's superior. But Parnell, unlike Mitchel, was born in due time. He was the one possible leader to work out the dangerous and delicate transition from Fenianism to constitutionalism. He accomplished that part of his task with supreme skill and superb audacity. Gentle and charming in

private, a lover of children and animals, in public life he combined a *sæva indignatio* with constructive ability of a high order. As a diplomatist he was unequalled. He rigidly, and at all costs, kept his word ; his bargains were completely fulfilled. A leading member of Parliament said of him that whilst he could talk with other Irish members as friends and comrades, Parnell gave the impression that he was always the ambassador from a none too friendly nation. He was unhappy in his death, but happy beyond telling in the work he had accomplished. Denied a golden and peaceful *nunc dimittis*, he at least justified the epitaph of another rebel :—

“ Bury me with clenched fist and eyes open wide,
For in storm and struggle I lived, and in struggle
and storm I died.”

It was no less Gladstone's triumph that he contrived a legislative proposal which not only secured Parnell's acquiescence, but enabled the Irish leader to declare that the measure spelt finality :—

“ I understand the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament to be this—that they can interfere in the event of the powers which are conferred by this bill being abused under certain circumstances. But the Nationalists, in accepting the bill, go, as I think, under an

honourable understanding not to abuse those powers ; and we pledge ourselves in that respect for the Irish people, as far as we can pledge ourselves, not to abuse those powers, and to devote our energies and our influences to prevent those powers being abused. The Imperial Parliament will have at command the force which it reserves to itself, and it will be ready to intervene, but only in the case of grave necessity arising. I believe that this is by far the best mode in which we can hope to settle this question. We look upon the provisions of this bill as a final settlement of the question, and I believe that the Irish people have accepted it as such a settlement."

Let it be remembered that Parnell set his standard high. In January of this very year he had made his famous declaration : " We cannot ask for less than the restitution of Grattan's Parliament, with its important privileges and wide, far-reaching constitution. We cannot under the British Constitution ask for more than the restitution of Grattan's Parliament. But no man has the right to fix the boundary of the march of a nation. No man has the right to say : ' Thus far shalt thou go and no farther ' ; and we have never attempted to fix the *ne plus ultra* to the progress of Ireland's nationhood, and we never shall." Yet with this pronouncement still ringing throughout the Irish world, Parnell, without *arrière pensée*, accepted Glad-

stone's bill as a final settlement. For myself, I think he was wrong. Had the bill become law, financial relations would have had subsequently to be modified in Ireland's favour.

What then were the main provisions of Gladstonian Home Rule? The 1893 bill is the better guide, as it represented Gladstone's second thoughts. It proposed to set up a legislature consisting of the King and two houses—the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly. The Council was to consist of 48 councillors elected by the following constituencies: Antrim, 3; Belfast, 2; Cork County, 3; Down, 3; Dublin County, 3; Dublin City, 2; Galway County, 2; Limerick County, 2; Tipperary County, 2; Cork City, 1. All the other counties were to have one member each, Leitrim and Sligo being amalgamated. The basis of representation was that of population. The right to vote for the election of these councillors was a property qualification—the owning or occupying of any land or tenement of a ratable value of more than £20. Plural voting was abolished. The term of each councillor's tenure of office was eight years, and was not to be affected by a dissolution. One half of the councillors were to retire every four years, their seats to be filled by a new election.

In the light of recent events in Great Britain,

it is interesting to observe the powers of this second chamber and the method of procedure. I quote from the 1893 bill :—

“ If a bill—or any provision of a bill—adopted by the Legislative Assembly is lost by the disagreement of the Legislative Council, and after a dissolution, or the period of two years from such disagreement, such bill, or a bill for enacting the said provisions, is again adopted by the Legislative Assembly and fails within three months afterwards to be adopted by the Legislative Council, the same shall forthwith be submitted to the members of the two Houses deliberating and voting thereon, and shall be adopted or rejected according to the decision of the majority of those members present and voting on the question.”

As a £20 qualification means much more in Ireland than in England, this clause would undoubtedly throw the whole of the political power into the hands of the middle classes. It would prove a source of prolific strife between the employing and working classes, and is accordingly reactionary both in fact and in intention. The proposal was a sop to the Protestants, to whom it was offered as a guarantee against Catholic oppression. But two blacks do not make a white. To give the minority, Protestant or otherwise, control over Irish legislation at the expense of the worker, in the

interests of the Protestants, is neither justice nor common sense. Is it not also evident that, if Catholic tyranny were contemplated, this clause would not save the Protestants, for extra-legal methods could easily be resorted to? Further, unless the British Parliament were completely convinced that religious oppression of the minority by the majority is an utter impossibility, the bill ought not to have been introduced at all. "Powers of revision and delay" is a formula that is fairly arguable. If we grant it, then it becomes evident under the bill that a Government with a small majority (which in Ireland will be inevitable) can always be swamped by a bourgeois vote, and its contentious bills rejected to the crack of doom. The better arrangement undoubtedly would be that now obtaining between the Lords and Commons in Great Britain. If the representative labour organisations accept any such clause in the forthcoming bill, they will sign their own political death-warrant.

Turning now to the Legislative Assembly, the bill provided that it should consist of 103 members to be returned by the existing Irish constituencies. It was to live for five years from the date it was summoned, unless sooner dissolved. After six years the Irish Legislature was empowered to

alter the qualifications of the electors and the distribution of the members amongst the constituencies, provided that in such distribution due regard was paid to the basis of population.

Gladstone defined the powers of the Irish Parliament by specifying what it must not do. It enacted that, with the exceptions and subject to the restrictions set out in the Act, there should be granted to the Irish Parliament power to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of Ireland in respect of matters exclusively relating to Ireland or some part thereof. The exceptions mentioned in the bill are worth setting out here, in view of the bill about to be introduced into Parliament :—

1. The Crown, or the succession to the Crown, or a Regency ; or the Lord Lieutenant as representative of the Crown.

2. The making of peace or war, or matters arising from a state of war.

3. Naval or military forces, or the defence of the realm.

4. Treaties and other relations with foreign States, or the relations between different parts of Her Majesty's dominions, or offences connected with such treaties or relations.

5. Dignities or titles of honour.

6. Treason, treason-felony, alienage, or naturalisation.

7. Trade with any place out of Ireland ; or quarantine, or navigation (except as regards inland waters and local health or harbour regulations).

8. Beacons, lighthouses, or sea-marks (except so far as they can consistently with any general Act of Parliament be constructed or maintained by a local harbour authority).

9. Coinage, legal tender ; or the standard of weights and measures.

10. Trade-marks, merchandise-marks, copyright or patent rights.

In addition to these exceptions, it was also laid down that the powers of the Irish Legislature should not extend to the making of any law—

1. Respecting the establishment or endowment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.

2. Imposing any disability, or conferring any privilege, on account of religious belief.

3. Abrogating or prejudicially affecting the right to establish or maintain any place of denominational education or any denominational institution or charity.

4. Prejudicially affecting the right of any child to attend a school receiving public money, without attending the religious instruction at that school.

5. Whereby any person may be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, or may be denied the equal protection of the laws, or whereby private property may be taken without just compensation.

6. Whereby any existing Corporation, incorporated by Royal Charter or by any local or general Act of Parliament (not being a Corporation raising for public purposes taxes, rates, cess, dues, or tolls, or administering funds so raised), may, unless it consents, or the leave of Her Majesty is first obtained on address from the two houses of the Irish Legislature, be deprived of its rights, privileges, or property, without due process of law.

7. Whereby any inhabitant of the United Kingdom may be deprived of equal rights as respects public sea fisheries.

There can be little objection to this series of exceptions and restrictions. One or two would, if persisted in, lead to some irritation. The question of trade-marks, for example. Whilst it is desirable that British trade-marks should not be prejudiced in Ireland, I can see no objection to the Irish Parliament legislating for special trade-marks on goods manufactured in Ireland. Another point worth careful consideration is the refusal to permit Ireland to have relations with foreign States and other British dominions. Of course, Ireland ought not to have diplomatic relations, but I can see no objection to the appointment of official agents in all those countries of the world where Ireland has trade connections or seeks them. Such agents could do their work much more effectively

than any British Consul. If the Lord Lieutenant were to veto money voted for such agents, there would (or ought to be) trouble. It will be noticed that the Protestants are amply protected *as Protestants*. The property qualification for a vote for the Legislative Council protects them *as capitalists*, and ought to be inadmissible.

I have already dealt very fully in Chapter VI. with the question of Irish finance. The provisions in the 1893 bill, as remodelled in Committee, were briefly as follows :—

1. That Ireland's contribution to Imperial expenditure should be a quota of her *true* revenue based on the receipts actually derived from the taxes and Crown lands in Ireland.

2. That this quota should consist of one-third of such revenue.

3. That Ireland should be credited with the other two-thirds, and likewise with her miscellaneous receipts, and with the surplus (if any) arising from her postal services.

4. That out of the revenue with which she would thus be credited, and taxes other than existing taxes which the Irish Legislature had power to impose, Ireland should provide two-thirds of the cost of the existing Constabulary and Dublin police forces, which under the bill remained *pro tempore* Imperial forces, pay all her civil government charges, and meet the deficit (if any) on her postal services.

5. That until the transfer hereafter mentioned, the

changes in the rates of Inland Revenue duties and Postal revenue in Ireland, as well as of the Customs revenue, should continue to rest with the Imperial Parliament, and that the collection should remain in the hands of the Imperial Government.

6. That if any special war-tax should be imposed, the whole of the proceeds collected in or contributed by Ireland should go to the Imperial Exchequer.

7. That these financial arrangements should be for six years, at the end of which period (1) they should be revised as regarded the Irish contribution to Imperial charges ; (2) the collection of the whole of the Inland Revenue should be transferred to the Irish Government ; and (3) the Irish Legislature should impose the stamp duties, income-tax, and excise licenses.

8. That for the purpose of determining the *true* annual revenue of Ireland, as distinguished from revenue collected there, an adjustment should be made by a Joint Committee of the Treasury and the Irish Government in the case of Customs and Excise, so as to provide that Ireland should be credited with the Customs and Excise duties, including any collected in Great Britain upon articles consumed in Ireland, but not with the duties, although collected in Ireland, upon articles consumed in Great Britain.

Much water has flowed under the bridge since 1893, and it is inconceivable that Ireland would now consent to any such financial terms. The Financial Relations Commission's Report was not issued until 1896, and, of course, put

a totally new complexion upon the problem. Then, again, Ireland's "true" revenue was only remotely guessed at, and it has since been proved that Mr Gladstone's advisers were completely in the dark. Further, taxation and revenue have enormously increased, as has expenditure. But England's population has steadily increased, whilst Ireland's decrease continues. Thus England's taxable capacity is greater and Ireland's less, whilst Ireland's need is relatively greater. For my part, even if alone, I insist emphatically that no solution of the financial problem can be final unless the Irish Parliament levies and controls every penny piece raised in Ireland by any form of taxation, direct or indirect. Take the Post Office. It is immaterial whether there is a loss or a gain. In 1892 there was a loss of £52,000. But the important thing is that the postal service be controlled by the Irish Parliament, not for financial gain but for convenience. Experience has taught England that a sleepy or backward agricultural area may be economically and commercially stimulated by a well-organised and sympathetic parcels post system. Suppose that the Post Office continues a British institution in Ireland. The Irish Executive desires to experiment in some district. Before it can move, there must be an interminable and

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irritating correspondence with the British authorities. It simply won't do !

Again, consider the Customs. Suppose the Irish Executive desires to economise by rearranging the duties and salaries of its civil servants. Again would ensue an equally devastating correspondence and delay with the British Exchequer. The case for complete Irish control of all public money raised in Ireland is one of principle, and unless it be courageously faced it will without any shadow of doubt ultimately lead to bickerings and bad blood. Let a true balance be struck as between the two countries ; let Great Britain recognise her debt, to be paid either in meal or malt, to Ireland on account of a century's over-taxation—an amount that almost certainly exceeds £200,000,000 ; let the two countries agree upon Ireland's true proportion in respect of exclusively Imperial charges : in this way, and only thus, can there be peace with honour and without subsequent tension.

Returning to the 1893 bill, only two other points call for notice. Gladstone determined to retain a reduced number of Irish members in the English Parliament, fixing the number at 80 instead of 103. He adopted the absurd "in and out" arrangement. The Irish members

were to be excluded from voting upon any motion or bill expressly confined to Great Britain ; they were not to vote upon any tax not levied in Ireland, nor for any appropriation of money other than for Imperial services ; nor were they to vote on motions or resolutions exclusively affecting Great Britain or things or persons therein. Although seriously intended, this proposal is really *pour rire*. By the aid of Irish votes a British Government might retain the confidence of the House ; without the Irish vote it might be in a minority on a purely domestic issue. On a vote of confidence the Government might win ; on the question of Home Rule for Scotland it might lose, although such a proposal might deeply affect Ireland. If Irishmen had made the proposal, they would have been regarded by Englishmen as more than usually mad ; coming from Gladstone, it was seriously discussed.

Finally, under the bill, the executive authority was, as at present, vested in the Lord Lieutenant as representing the Sovereign. He was to summon, prorogue, and dissolve the Irish Parliament on the British model. An Executive Committee of the Privy Council of Ireland was to aid and advise in the government of Ireland, being of such numbers, and comprising persons holding

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such offices, as the Sovereign might think fit, or be directed by Irish Act. The Lord Lieutenant, on the advice of this Executive Committee, was to give or withhold his assent to bills passed by the Irish Parliament, but he was to be subject, nevertheless, to any instructions given him by the Sovereign in respect of any such bill. The ultimate veto, therefore, was vested in the Sovereign (acting, of course, on the advice of the British Premier) and not in the Imperial Parliament, which, therefore, stood in the same relation to the Irish Parliament as it does to Canada, Australia, or South Africa.

With the defeat of the 1903 bill, Gladstone's career as a constructive statesman came to an end. He lingered yet a little longer on the stage, but his own and his party's prospects were bleak and forbidding. Mr Chamberlain exultingly exclaimed that Home Rule was as dead as Queen Anne. It was neither the first nor the last of that gentleman's miscalculations. Truth to tell, however, Ireland by her dissensions lent colour to Mr Chamberlain's premature prophecy. For ten disastrous years the Parnell split continued, to the dismay of Ireland's friends and the joy of her enemies. On every side was darkness, doubt, and hesitation. Sir Horace Plunkett was the one man in Ireland who went steadily on with

his propaganda for the material regeneration of the country. Suspected by the extremists of both sides, he nevertheless stood out in the darkness as the one reforming force, at a time when others were exhausting themselves in internecine strife. Ten years of ranching in America had taught him much in the way of practical farming, and on his return in 1888 he devoted himself to the rural revival. In due course he formed the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, which became the parent of agricultural co-operation in Ireland. It is said that he addressed fifty meetings before he succeeded in forming his first rural association. He not only had to face dense ignorance of the principle of co-operation, but he was hindered by the abyss between the Catholic and Protestant farmers. Perhaps more difficult still was the opposition of the traders and "gombeen" men. Fortunately, nothing dismayed him, and now his co-operative children represent about one-seventh of the Irish population.

This non-political movement had profound political results. It led to the Recess Committee, which was formed in 1895. No such collection of contending creeds ever met before in Ireland in amity and united purpose. To it went Father Finlay, a Jesuit, who would meet there Dr Kane,

Grand Master of the Belfast Orangemen. Mr Redmond sat cheek by jowl with The O'Connor Don and Lord Mayo. The report of this Committee on agricultural methods in Germany, Denmark, Belgium, and France is one of the most interesting and suggestive documents of the kind. This report was largely responsible for the Agriculture and Technical Instruction Act, which became law in 1899. This Act, in its turn, led to the establishment of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, which spends in various ways nearly £170,000 a year.

But my point just now is not the good work done by this particular department, but rather that Sir Horace Plunkett's work created a new atmosphere in Ireland. In this new atmosphere, and inspired by the new spirit, sprang that chain of events culminating in the Dunraven Conference and the Devolution proposals.

I have already, in Chapter IV., discussed the Dunraven Conference. I fear that the landlords on that occasion exploited the new spirit of compromise to their own immense profit. Like Lickcheese, they realised that sentiment and business sometimes go well together. But, much though one may disapprove the terms of land purchase agreed upon at that Conference, it is

impossible not to see that it stirred new ideas in the landed oligarchy, which finally materialised in the Irish Reform Association, composed entirely of Unionists who were dissatisfied with the negative policy of their party. In 1904 they issued a programme proposing: (1) the devolution of private bills and of such other Irish affairs as Parliament should delegate to an Irish deliberative body; and (2) the creation of an Irish Financial Council, half nominated by the Lord Lieutenant and half elected, to prepare, control, and regulate the Budget of Ireland; the existing rights of the Imperial Parliament remaining untouched. To these proposals Mr Wyndham, at that time Chief Secretary, lent a kindly ear. But the Balfour Government were frightened by the Abercorn and Londonderry section, and Mr Wyndham had to resign.

Meantime, the Irish party had again unified itself, so that, one way and another, Ireland again grew hopeful. The solid phalanx of the Irish landlords had at last been broken—in part by land purchase, in part by devolution. Mr Redmond had only to wait for the Liberals to come back. They came back in 1906, but pledged not to deal with Home Rule during that Parliament. In 1908, however, Mr Birrell brought in the Irish Council Bill, which many regarded as

a stepping-stone to Home Rule. It proposed to set up in Dublin an administrative council consisting of eighty-two elected and twenty-four nominated members, with the Under Secretary as an *ex officio* member. It was to control eight of the forty-five departments which constitute Dublin Castle—Local Government, Public Works, National Education, Intermediate Education, Registrar-General's Department, Public Works, Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, Congested Districts, and Reformatory Schools. The bill further proposed to constitute an Irish Treasury with an Irish fund of £4,000,000, the amount now voted to the eight departments affected, plus an added sum of £650,000.

The Irish Convention called to consider the bill, comprising 3000 delegates, unanimously rejected it. There were many reasons for this. In the first place, the financial arrangements were hopelessly inadequate ; secondly, owing to the power reserved to the Lord Lieutenant, the Council has only the semblance of power without the substance ; thirdly, if the measure would not actually have killed Home Rule for a generation, it would almost certainly have postponed it for some years.

Thus we see that since 1893 Ireland has once more gone full circle, from hope to despair, from

despair to compromise, from compromise to promise : and so back again to the only possible national solution. Is her hope at last to be realised ? Or is it yet again the lure of Tantalus ?

XII

THE ULTIMATE SOLUTION

THERE is a consensus of opinion that Ireland suffers from arrested development. M. Paul-Dubois calls it "an extreme case of social pathology." Out of it spring intellectual and social mal-adjustments, the sequelæ of a disease now deeply rooted and a century old. British administration has failed to diagnose the cause or to apply the remedy. In its blundering way, largely unconsciously, it has exacerbated the pain and suffering and seemed surprised that Ireland has not more readily responded to its policy of misapplied kicks and inappropriate flattery. What to Ireland is sacred appears to England as shallow sentimentality or affectation. The idea of wounded nationality is to England simply incomprehensible. "It doesn't pay," says blunt John Bull, and shrugs his massive shoulders. It would certainly have paid England to realise the facts half a century ago. But the

Irish landed interests too successfully appealed to feudal England, whilst the prejudice against Catholicism was exploited by the Celtiphobe section of Ulster. The result has been that all spontaneous British legislation for Ireland has been maleficent, whilst beneficent Irish Acts have only been obtained under the pressure of threats and bitter hatred. "Not foreign government but foreign rule is Ireland's bane," said Wolfe Tone, putting his finger on the spot.

One result of England's more recent policy has again led to a dangerous misunderstanding. The British apologist now says that whilst it may be true that Great Britain made many mistakes in her Irish policy in days gone by, there can be no complaint now, because later legislation has been so ameliorative that Ireland is now prosperous. Therefore, he contends, better let the Union pursue its policy of "killing Home Rule with kindness," for by that means both countries will in the long-run be satisfied. It is a futile argument and a vain hope. It is impossible to generalise about Ireland's prosperity. It is true that the Irish farmer in Leinster and eastern Munster has benefited in recent years (*a*) by the annual saving in the difference between his annuity payable to the Government and his former rent; and (*b*) by the maintenance of good agricultural prices.

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But even that is only partially true, for we have seen that land purchase is as yet a very partial proceeding, only 84,000 tenants having received the approval of the Land Commission out of 230,000 applications. We have further discovered that the agricultural labourer is as yet far from the land of promise, whilst in Ulster the linen industry is not so prosperous as the Protestant propagandists declare. But, apart from this, and far more serious, is the fact that the western problem remains unsolved. It is stretching the facts, therefore, to aver that to-day Ireland is prosperous. That there is an improvement since the 'seventies we may thankfully recognise, but that is surely a poor boast. Bearing in mind the economic possibilities of Ireland, would it not be understating the case to affirm that she cannot be really prosperous until emigration has ceased? One might go further and claim that the real test ought to be when Ireland's population begins again to increase. Compare the Irish and Scottish populations :—

	Scotland.	Ireland.
1841	2,620,184	8,175,124
1901	4,472,103	4,458,775
1911	4,759,521	4,381,951

The estimated population of Ireland on June 30, 1907, was 4,378,568. Thus, whilst the English

and Scottish populations still advance, the Irish population still declines. There is no reason under the sun why Ireland should thus be denuded of her flesh and blood. The old belief was that Irishmen are inherently and incurably lazy. But this has been exploded by the plain fact that in every other country where they settle, Irishmen are industrious and successful, and are not even afraid of the most laborious and irksome tasks. We see, too, that where the tenure of their land is secure they work early and late. Before Irish autonomy had crystallised into a party question, before the issues had been obscured, Lord Salisbury—then Lord Robert Cecil—saw the exact situation. In 1865 he said :—

“ What is the reason that people with so bountiful a soil, with such enormous resources [as the Irish], lag so far behind the English in the race ? Some say that it is to be found in the character of the Celtic race ; but I look to France, and I see a Celtic race there going forward in the path of prosperity with most rapid strides—I believe at the present moment more rapidly than England herself. Some people say that it is to be found in the Roman Catholic religion ; but I look to Belgium, and there I see a people second to none in Europe except the English for industry, singularly prosperous considering the small space of country that they occupy, having improved to the utmost the

natural resources of that country, but distinguished amongst all the people of Europe for the earnestness and intensity of their Roman Catholic belief. Therefore I cannot say that the cause of the Irish distress is to be found in the Roman Catholic religion. An hon. friend near me says that it arises from the Irish people listening to demagogues. I have as much dislike to demagogues as he has, but when I look to the Northern States of America I see there people who listen to demagogues, but who undoubtedly have not been wanting in material prosperity. It cannot be demagogues, Romanism, or the Celtic race. What then is it? *I am afraid that the one thing which has been peculiar to Ireland has been the Government of England.*"

Mutatis mutandis, what has changed? France and Belgium still prosper; America still listens to the demagogues: the Government of England in Ireland still festers.

Too much stress cannot be laid upon Ireland's need for detailed economic legislation directly applied to local needs. It is easy to affirm that Ireland now prospers under the Union. We see that this is only partially true. But it would be inadequate even if absolutely true. The real question is not how far does Ireland now remain economically stationary or economically improve, but how much more effective would be her development under her own autonomy. Putting aside the larger political issues (which are mostly

bogies)—Protestant oppression and the like—the outstanding fact remains that the congestion of business in the British Parliament renders it hopeless to expect it to redress the arrears of urgent material Irish legislation. It would be easy to cite dozens of instances to show the loss entailed on Ireland by sheer Parliamentary procrastination. I have already referred to drainage, transit, waste lands, afforestation. But consider arterial drainage. It is not in the slightest degree a political question. It is purely one of finance and Parliamentary time. Ruin and desolation have spread over five counties in Ulster by the constant flooding of the Bann. Whole families are frequently driven from their homes to seek refuge on higher ground. For seven months in the year large areas are flooded to a depth of 2 feet 6 inches. The Owenmore in Sligo annually lays waste thousands of acres, and six hundred families are affected. The Barrow drains one of the largest river-areas in Ireland—480,000 acres, and of these 46,000 acres are constantly flooded. Not only are the farm lands affected, but also the towns of Athy, Monasterevan, Portarlinton, and Mountmellick. Royal Commissions have sat and reported, but the British Parliament has never the money available. If these were English rivers, these floodings would long since have been

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remedied. Observe that it is sound economics to undertake works such as these. The Indian Government does it systematically. Belgium (which is governed at half the price per head of the Irish cost) has spent £16,000,000 on drainage works during the last twenty-five years. But for overtaxed Ireland there is no redress ; over it hover the frustrate ghosts of the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin. It is always "Not thus and not now."

Even if we assume a general improvement in Irish prosperity, it would be a profound blunder, because of it, to reckon on any slackening of the Irish national spirit. It is commonly said in certain British circles that when once the Irish farmer is satisfied he will sink into sleepy contentment and become a defaulter from the national army. There is not the slightest sanction for any such assumption. On the contrary, the demand for the recognition of Irish nationality grows not less acute, but more articulate and more sweetly reasoned. Who ever heard of a people who grew less proud as a nation the more prosperous they became ? There is no sign that the American people become ashamed of their flag as they accumulate great wealth. There is no relaxation of national pride amongst the Germans as they gain their commercial

victories. The French are now stupendously rich ; their national sentiment is as sensitive as ever. Nor does the Canadian Government rely more and more upon British policy as its wealth and its population advance by bounds. The story of the reciprocity negotiations effectually negatives any such idea. But a prosperous nation will assert itself in a widely different manner from what it would if it were poverty-stricken. The hectic oratory of a consumptive differs from the strong utterance of a robust man, but the underlying argument may be the same. Ireland, consumptive and weak, cries out for national life in shrill, feverish shrieks ; Ireland, robust and self-reliant, will still demand her autonomy, but in strong and balanced terms. It would be wise for Great Britain to remember that the strong are more dangerous than the weak.

Two factors in the development of Irish nationality have a distinct bearing upon the vitality of its claim to recognition—the Irish University Act and the Gaelic movement.

In a former chapter (Irish Local Government) I have dealt with the depressing condition of elementary education in Ireland. Intermediate and technical education is not much better, because it necessarily depends upon the efficiency of elementary education, to which only 55 per

cent. of the children go. There is literally not the ghost of a chance that the British Parliament can ever legislate for Irish education. But, scandalously though the lower educational grades are administered, university education was an even greater scandal. Trinity College, Dublin, was founded by Queen Elizabeth with the proceeds of confiscated Catholic and monastic lands, to propagate Protestantism. It was for two centuries and more exclusively Episcopalian in its tenets and its "atmosphere." During Grattan's Parliament it widened its borders but maintained its "atmosphere." Technically, it has been open to Catholics and Presbyterians since Fawcett's Act removed religious tests. But its chapel services are Protestant, as are its divinity schools. Its governing body—Provost and seven Fellows—is entirely Protestant; and of the 4200 names on its electoral roll, 2600 are Protestant clergymen. Thus, whatever may be the technical forms of admission, it is clear that its "atmosphere" excludes Catholics. It is futile to cry over spilt milk, but when we think of the rôle that Trinity College might have played in Ireland's history we can only bow the head in shame. If, however, Trinity College, Dublin, was so aggressively Protestant in tone as to frighten away Catholic students, the Queen's

Colleges, founded by Sir Robert Peel in 1838, were declared "undenominational," and therefore ran counter both to Catholic and Presbyterian prejudices or principles. Thus the colleges of Cork, Galway, and Belfast were from their birth doomed to failure, and lived in a state of semi-inanition down to 1908, when Mr Birrell successfully passed his Irish Universities Act. This measure provides for two universities—one at Dublin and one at Belfast. The Queen's College at Belfast becomes Belfast University, remodelled and with an increased endowment. The Dublin University becomes a federal institution, comprising a new Metropolitan College now being established, together with the Queen's Colleges of Cork and Galway, also remodelled and with increased endowments. Both universities are free from tests, but the "atmosphere" will suit the requirements of the Catholics, and thither we may expect young Ireland to flock and so become centres of Irish culture.

Already we may observe in the Dublin University a distinct stirring of Irish nationality. The students have already made their sentiments felt in no unmistakable manner. They will develop a culture racy of the soil ; it will assuredly be no sycophantic imitation of Oxford or Cambridge, and certainly not of Birmingham. These students

are the sons of farmers ; Young Ireland, even if it live under more prosperous conditions, will be not less nationalist in its sentiments and, if necessary, in its sacrifices.

But, significant though the spirit is of the Irish student, who can now go to his national university, still more significant is the Gaelic renaissance heralding the liberation of the Irish soul. "The tongue of the conquerors in the mouth of the conquered is but the language of slaves," wrote Tacitus ; and already Ireland, waking from her long trance of unconscious Anglicisation, is rapidly swinging back to her own beautiful tongue, with the culture and the manners implied in it. Although quite young, the Gaelic League has now nearly a thousand branches, and is annually spending over £6000 in propaganda. There are nearly 200,000 children learning Irish in the elementary schools, and 5000 in the secondary schools. The movement is spreading with amazing rapidity, and we may safely anticipate that the next generation will be affected by, if not actually impregnated with, both the Gaelic language and spirit. It is only a few years ago that to speak Gaelic was regarded as undignified. Mgr. MacHale has told how when he asked one of his diocesans to discuss their business in Irish the priest replied : "Your

Grace, I have a great deal too much respect for you." It is related that a farm labourer asked his comrade some question in Irish, only to receive the reply: "Hell to your soul! can't I speak English as well as you!" That ugly spirit is dying down and bygone Ireland is experiencing a joyous resurrection. And not before it was time. Completely to Anglicise the Irish is an impossible metempsychosis. Acute observers tell us that in this process of Anglicisation it is the worst features of Anglo-Saxon character, its vices and not its virtues, that are most easily acquired. The Protestant Dr Douglas Hyde and the Catholic Cardinal-Primate of Ireland are agreed that where the Irish tongue is spoken, there is to be found the highest morale. But, indeed, it is self-evident that a nation best develops and gives most to the world by developing its natural gifts and native qualities. This is peculiarly so with the Irish, for they inherit a mysticism and spirituality from their ancestors that is not only of the most precious value, but, if lost, leaves them a prey to the corrupting influences of an alien civilisation against which they have ceased to be immune.

Apart, then, from the purely material considerations of national life, we see a new spiritual

Ireland rising from its ashes. No longer can it be said :

“ The bat, the owl, inhabit here,
The snake nests in the altar-stone,
The image of the god is gone.”

England is faced with the problem, not of a decaying but of a reviving nation. In these circumstances, is it prudent to trust to a mere commercial revival to slow down the agitation ? On the contrary, does it not become evident that the first faint touch of prosperity brings with it, not complaisance, but a higher and more enduring sentiment of nationality ? And, “ if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry ? ”

Thus far the argument has been directed to show that Ireland must benefit under a generous grant of autonomy. But what of England ? Does she stand to gain or lose ?

Obviously, an entirely new train of considerations here arises. Ireland looks in upon itself ; England is a world-power and deeply concerned with the maintenance of her influence in all the continents and on every sea. If Irish Home Rule weakens her prestige, it would be asking too much of human nature to expect Great Britain to grant it. What, then, does Great Britain first and foremost need to maintain her

position as a world-force ? Undoubtedly, material and moral strength. How can she acquire it ? By the unwavering unity of all the parts of her empire. But she has already learnt by bitter experience that a modern empire can only hold together by the free exercise of autonomy by its component parts. All the local legislatures of the German Empire have full control over education, religion, police, land tenure, local government and direct taxation. Had Great Britain recognised the wisdom of this earlier on, it is conceivable that to-day she would be in organic connection or federation with the United States of America. She only awoke to the truth of it in time to save Canada. When Queen Victoria came to the throne, the British Government ordered the Te Deum to be sung in Canadian churches. It was a fiasco ; the congregations left the churches *en masse*. To-day, Canada does not dream of leaving the Empire.

The story of Canadian conciliation is singularly *à propos*. As in Ireland, there were two races : the French Canadians, who were Catholics ; the British settlers, who were Protestants. The Protestant minority claimed ascendancy just as do the Orange factions in Ulster. They had the ear of the British Government, just like Dublin Castle. English statesmen turned a deaf ear to

the pleadings of the majority for autonomy. The Duke of Wellington thought he had settled the question when he sententiously observed : " Local responsible government and the sovereignty of Great Britain are completely incompatible." Lord Stanley argued that Canadian Home Rule inevitably meant the formation of a Republic and the oppression of the Protestant minority. Lord Gosford, the Governor-General, in 1837, wrote :—

" The Papineau faction are not to be satisfied with any concession that does not place them in a more favourable position to carry into effect their ulterior objects, namely, the separation of this country from England and the establishment of a Republican form of government."

He might have been an Irish Viceroy reporting on Parnell. His understrappers sent in reports of boycotting and intimidation, just as they do in Ireland. They reported also upon agitators and cattle-driving. Fortunately for Great Britain, a wise man, in the person of Lord Durham, went out to Canada ; Canadian autonomy was granted ; and to-day the British Empire is incalculably the stronger for it.

Great Britain is rapidly moving towards another crisis in her history as an empire. The populations of Canada, Australasia, and South

Africa now aggregate fifteen million white people. On the average these colonial citizens of the Empire attain a higher standard of life than obtains in England. They are now giving signs and hints that they are not satisfied with their status. Questions of defence, of liability and responsibility in case of war, of foreign policy as it affects the different "dominions beyond the seas"—notably Japanese policy in regard to Australia, African policy in regard to South Africa, and American policy in regard to Canada—all these vital issues cannot be indefinitely postponed.

Even if the self-governing colonies were not particularly concerned about their status in the Empire, Great Britain is already feeling the need for a clearer definition of function and liability. The cardinal fact to-day is that the poverty-stricken denizens of British cities, as well as the equally poor peasants of Connaught or the Western Highlands, are paying for the naval defence of these wealthy Colonies, who ought to contribute to the Imperial Exchequer, for exclusively Imperial charges, about fifteen forty-fifths, or one-third of the cost of maintaining the Empire, after deducting, of course, purely domestic expenses. In hard cash alone this ought to ease Great Britain's burden by

£15,000,000 a year. One thing, however, is certain. The British Colonies will never consent to any such financial contribution without representation on an Imperial Council which would control both policy and expenditure. But this is precisely what the British hierarchy does not want. It infinitely prefers to keep control of all Imperial affairs, including the army and navy, rather than share it with the Colonies. Any student of world-politics could tell the British officials that sooner rather than later they must relinquish their monopoly of control. An Imperial Council is now a necessity. Great Britain cannot pay for the perpetual defence of great communities like Canada and Australia without an adequate *quid pro quo*, and that won't be forthcoming without adequate representation.

There can be but little doubt that an Imperial Council would make for the strengthening of the British Empire, with a corresponding lessening of Great Britain's financial burden. But any form of federation is impossible until Ireland's claims are met. Suppose Great Britain tries to effect federation whilst declining to grant Home Rule. The result would be that the Colonies would decline to come in. For two reasons: first, because the subjection of Ireland

would constitute a precedent to which they could not possibly assent ; and, secondly, because the Irish vote throughout the Empire is too strong to allow federation to be carried until Ireland could join it as a separate entity. Thus we discover that Irish Home Rule is not merely a domestic problem as between England and Ireland, but also an Imperial question having a vital bearing upon Imperial federation. If, therefore, Great Britain seriously contemplates federation, she must first make her peace with Ireland. It follows that it is entirely to her interest to settle the Home Rule problem as speedily as possible.

In this connection it would be wise policy on Great Britain's part to make Home Rule an integral part of her federal scheme. The present Liberal Government, in its preamble to the Parliament Act, presaged reform of the House of Lords. Might not the preamble to the Home Rule Bill, in like manner, adumbrate a scheme of Imperial Federation ? Perhaps it might consider federation of England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland as a preliminary step to the larger organisation. The important thing, in any event, is to embody the federal principle and so make the Home Rule Bill a new departure from the present bureaucratic control of Imperial policy

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—a control that recent events have shown to be excessively dangerous and expensive.

At the present moment there is no organ of Empire. The Crown is the only link that binds together the several parts. But the Crown knows no politics and is merely a symbol. Probably the Privy Council comes nearest to federal requirements. But the Privy Council's duties are vague, nominal, and of purely formal value, because it has no authority. Give it authority by transforming it into the Imperial Council, to which each self-governing colony should send representatives in proportion to its contribution to the Imperial Exchequer. The underlying conception of such a Council must not be the *imperium in imperio*, but rather that it is to be the servant of the Commonwealth of Commonwealths—the most gigantic experiment in democracy that the world will ever see.

In such a scheme as this a conciliated Ireland would play a most valuable part. Its influence, not only in the Colonies, but in America, would be great, even beyond its numerical strength, because we find that wherever Irishmen go they associate both for social and political purposes. Undoubtedly it would pay Great Britain to put an end to the Irish feud.

But for urgent reasons Ireland cannot wait.

She has now been wrought up to a pitch of expectancy, much more confident and assured than in 1893. If again she is to be disappointed, the results cannot fail to be grave, far-reaching and menacing to Great Britain. Any further postponement will be fraught with danger not only to the British constitution but to the Empire as a whole. The comparatively crude methods of fighting adopted by Parnell and Davitt will, if needs must, give way to infinitely more effective methods of opposition to British government not only in Ireland but in all parts of the world. Who can contemplate with equanimity the evil and ugly consequences that must flow from the national exasperation that would be caused by another Great Refusal? Ireland has had more than her share of the "everlasting no."

The great need at the present crisis is for courageous statesmanship. Too often English politicians are cautious to the point of cowardice. It is courage—" *de l'audace, de l'audace, et toujours de l'audace* "—that is now the only solvent of this obstinate problem. A courage that will not shrink from telling Protestant Ulster that it is now Irish; a courage that will face English society, which has so long been under the social influence of those landed interests that have brought Ireland to the verge of bankruptcy; a

courage that will recognise and act upon the knowledge that a generous financial settlement will be best for both countries.

A final word is perhaps desirable upon Ireland's good faith in the matter of separation. The overwhelming mass of the Irish nation realise fully that it would be contrary to their own interests to be cut adrift. Nowhere, with the exception of the inconsiderable Sinn Fein group, is there the slightest ambition to undertake that vast expenditure which is involved in the vainglorious trappings of a sovereign state—an army and navy, a diplomatic service, a court of some sort. Such futility is never seriously contemplated. What Ireland demands is independence of the British Parliament combined with loyalty to the Empire of which she is a part. Her case is analogous to that of Finland. Finland acknowledges the Tsar as her Grand Duke, but her Diet claims to make laws independent of the Duma. "St George's Channel forbids union; the Ocean forbids separation," said Grattan. And the same idea has been uttered in less picturesque phraseology by O'Connell, Butt, Parnell, and Redmond, all of whom knowingly committed themselves to the federal solution. There are at least three reasons why separation would be repugnant to Ireland. She does not desire to be cut off from

Irishmen in Great Britain ; she is deeply attached to the Irish populations in Canada and Australia ; and her economic and commercial bonds with England cannot and ought not to be broken. The import and export trade of Ireland is now about £125,000,000 annually, but only 1·5 per cent. is done direct with foreign countries. That, surely, is a final and clinching argument.

From every point of view, Ireland's claim for autonomy is made out ; sentiment and reason march hand in hand. It is urgently desirable for Ireland's sake ; it is certainly equally urgent and desirable for England's sake. It may well be that there is an even greater and more enduring reason. One of the greatest qualities possessed by Irishmen is a long memory and an unrivalled tenacity of faith. When Western civilisation goes down in the next great spiritual and racial cataclysm, when its very traces have been submerged in an ocean of new ideas, when its organisation has been swept into oblivion by the hordes of its conquerors, it will be found that Ireland will be the last bulwark of the old faiths and systems, and a last sanctuary for their prophets and seers.

APPENDIX

I.—PARNELL'S LETTER TO RHODES ON FEDERAL HOME RULE

June 23rd, 1888.

DEAR SIR,—I am much obliged to you for your letter of the 9th inst., which confirms the very interesting account given me at Avondale last January by Mr MacNeill as to his interviews and conversations with you on the subject of Home Rule for Ireland. I may say at once, and frankly, that you correctly judged the exclusion of the Irish members from Westminster to have been a defect in the Home Rule measure of 1886, and, further, that this proposed exclusion may have given some colour to the accusation so freely made against the Bill that it had a separatist tendency. I say this while strongly asserting and believing that the measure itself was accepted by the Irish people without any afterthought of the kind, and with an earnest desire to work it out with the same spirit with which it was offered—a spirit of cordial good-will and trust, a desire to let bygones be bygones, and a determination to accept it as a final and satisfactory settlement of the long-standing dispute between Great Britain and Ireland.

I am very glad that you consider the measure of Home Rule to be granted to Ireland should be thorough-going, and should give her complete control over her own affairs without reservation, and I cordially agree with your opinion that there should be effective safeguards for the maintenance of Imperial unity. Your conclusion as to the only alternative for Home Rule is also entirely my own, for I have long felt that the continuance of the present semi-constitutional system is quite impracticable. But to return to the question of the retention of the Irish members at Westminster. My own views upon the points and probabilities of the future, and the bearing of this subject upon the question of Imperial federation—my own feeling upon the measure is that if Mr Gladstone includes in his next Home Rule measure the provisions of such retention we should cheerfully concur with him, and accept them with good-will and good faith, with the intention of taking our share in the Imperial partnership. I believe also that in the event I state this will be the case, and that the Irish people will cheerfully accept the duties and responsibilities assigned to them, and will justly value the position given to them in the Imperial system. I am convinced that it would be the highest statesmanship on Mr Gladstone's part to devise a feasible plan for the continued presence of the Irish members here; and from my observation of public events and opinions since 1885, I am sure that Mr Gladstone is fully alive to the importance of the matter, and that there can be no doubt that the next measure of autonomy for Ireland will contain the provisions which you rightly deem of such moment.

It does not come so much within my province to express a full opinion upon the larger question of Imperial federation, but I agree with you that the continued Irish representation at Westminster immensely facilitates such a step, while the contrary provision in the Bill of 1886 would have been a bar. Undoubtedly this is a matter which should be dealt with in accordance largely with the opinion of the colonies themselves, and if they should desire to share in the cost of Imperial matters, as undoubtedly they now do in the responsibility, and should express a wish for representation at Westminster, I certainly think it should be accorded to them, and that public opinion in these islands would unanimously concur in the necessary constitutional modifications.

I am, dear Sir, yours truly,

CHARLES STEWART PARNELL.

II.—PURCHASE AGREEMENTS LODGED UNDER THE LAND PURCHASE ACT 1903

Province.	No. of Purchase Agreements lodged.	Purchase Money agreed on.	Average Pur- chase Price per Holding.
		£	£ s. d.
Ulster . . .	84,869	19,219,269	226 9 0
Leinster . . .	53,440	25,734,931	481 11 0
Connaught . . .	26,163	5,227,106	199 16 0
Munster . . .	58,261	24,502,959	420 11 0
Total . . .	222,733	74,684,265	335 6 0

III.—ADVANCES MADE UNDER THE LAND PURCHASE ACT 1903

From 1st November 1903 to 31st March 1911

No. of Estates.	Classification.	No. of Agreements.	Purchase Money.		
			Price.	Amount of Advances made.	Amount of Cash Payments.
3631	AT 3½ PER CENT. ANNUITIES.		£	£	£
	(a) Tenanted land . . .	82,818	32,205,247	31,973,149	232,098
	(b) " Parcels " . . .	1,713*	211,133	204,963	6,170
	(c) " Demesnes " . . .	114	783,282	681,753	101,529
	(d) " Trustees " . . .	20	401	401	—
	Total . . .	83,337	33,200,063	32,860,266†	339,797
	AT 3½ PER CENT. ANNUITIES.				
	(a) Tenanted land . . .	1,007	329,575	323,157	6,418
	(b) " Parcels " . . .	35*	447	427	20
	(c) " Demesnes " . . .	1	462	462	—
	(d) " Trustees " . . .	2	2,251	2,251	—
	Total . . .	1,012	332,735	326,297	6,438
	Period ended 31st March 1911 . . .	84,349	33,532,798	33,186,563	346,235

* 1361 of these parcels were consolidated with holdings.

† In addition, a sum of £530 was advanced, as enhanced price on resale, under sec. 17 (1) of the Evicted Tenants Act, 1907.

IV.—LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN IRELAND

	Ulster.	Munster.	Leinster.	Con-naught.
Built	6103	14,811	12,917	1578
In course of construction .	794	1997	1804	462
Loans sanctioned	£1,396,606	£3,099,730	£2,852,529	£452,720
Loans received .	£1,237,377	£2,586,999	£2,404,245	£337,915
Amount to be raised annually in payment }	£32,985	£75,968	£77,218	£11,191
Rate per £. .	2·31d.	6·11d.	5·27d.	1·94d.
Amount of Ex-chequer contribution for year ending Mar. 31, 1911 }	£2734	£15,557	£11,971	£548
Amount of rent received for year ending Mar. 31, 1911 . . }	£18,663	£33,249	£35,465	£3915

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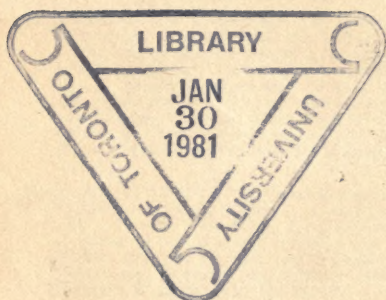
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